TL55

EAST TIMOR
SANTA CRUZ

INDONESIAN ARMY OPENS FIRE ON AN UNARMED CROWD

Photo: Steve Cox / Independente
Cover photo: Yorkshire TV

East Timor

the SANTA CRUZ massacre

Indonesian army opens fire on an unarmed crowd

Contents

Editorial	3
East Timor - background	5
UN (resolutions)	6
Threats before 12 November 1991	7
The fight for the right to talks	8
Santa Cruz,12 November 1991:	
- the demonstration	10
- the shooting	12
- the round-up of the wounded	14
Violence after 12 November	16
Foreign witnesses and Indonesian authorities	18
Provocations?	20
Reactions:	
- international public opinion	22
- world powers	24
- Indonesian authorities and public opinion	26
Commission of inquiry	28
New witnesses	30

Compiled and edited by
A Paz é Possível em Timor Leste
(Peace is Possible in East Timor)
Ecumenical Association
Translated into English by B.Williams / F.Rayner
Printed by Neograf - Artes Gráficas - February 1992

A Paz é Possível em Timor Leste
Rua de Campolide, 215 - 4D
1000 Lisbon PORTUGAL
☎ (1) 57 69 52

normal price: US $ 3
support price: US $ 10
post and packing: (Europe) US $ 3
(outside Europe) US $ 5

Contacts:

International
- Amnesty International
  1 Easton Street
  London, WC1 8DJ, UK
  Fax: (71) 956 1157
- Parliamentarians for East Timor
  International Secretariat
  111 Northwood Road
  Surrey CR7 8HW, UK
  Fax: (81) 653 0322
- Jurists for East Timor
  Arendshorst, 144
  NL - 2317 CX Leiden, Hollande
  Fax: 071 - 221065
- Yorkshire TV (United Kingdom)
  (for the TV documentary on Timor)
  Fax: (71) 8317260

Australia
- Australian Council for Overseas Aid
  124 Napier St.
  Fitzroy 3065, Australia
  Fax: (03) 416 2746

Canada
- East Timor Alert Network
  104 - 2120 West 44th St.
  Vancouver BC, Canada
  V6M 2G2

Hong Kong
- Asian Center Progress of Peoples
  48 Princess Margareth Road
  Kowloon, Hong Kong
  Fax: 711 3545

Indonesia
Infight
Jl Tebet Dalam IG n.35
Jakarta 12810, Indonesia
Fax (21) 830 29 33

New Zealand
NFIP Pacific Concerns Ressource Center
PO Box 3148 Auckland Central Post
Auckland, Aotearoa - New Zealand

Sweden
- Osttimor kommiten
  PO Box 70341
  S-10723 Stockholm
  Sweden

United Kingdom
- Tapol
  111 Northwood Road
  Surrey CR7 8HW, UK
  Fax: (81) 653 0322
- Catholic Inst. Intern. Relations
  Unit 3 Canon Buryyard
  190a New North Road,
  London N1 7BJ, UK
  Fax (71) 359 0017

USA
- Asia Watch
  485 Fifth Avenue
  New York NY 10017 , USA
  Fax: (212) 972 0905

for contacts in Germany, France, Netherlands, Italy, Japan, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland: see cover, French section.

TL55

Editorial

The need to prevent further loss of life, together with legal arguments about the right to self-determination, has been an underlying theme of the UN resolutions calling for the withdrawal of Indonesian armed forces stationed in East Timor.

The lack of political will to put these resolutions into practice has led to real genocide in East Timor; the Santa Cruz massacre constitutes a very small (perhaps less than a thousandth [1/1000]) part of this.

Neither in the Middle East nor Central America, nor even in Cambodia, has a people in recent history undergone a genocide comparable to that of the East Timorese in proportion to their population. Between 1975 and 1981, 200,000 Timorese were killed, almost a third of the total population. The massacre continues.

The cultural genocide has been no less violent than the physical. Contrary to what some foreign observers may have thought back in 1975, no rapprochement came about between the occupying force and those occupied. The Timorese youth, educated in Indonesian schools, in Indonesian language, and according to Indonesian principles, have risen up to protest against having their identity taken from them, and they are currently to be found in the front line of the struggle, as the massacre in the Santa Cruz cemetery showed.

In 16 years, no progress has been made towards integration. The education system, health care, the road network, and the system of administration which Indonesia imported, are considered instruments of subjugation by the Timorese.

Economic development is, for the most part, dominated by monopolies which are in the hands of a few generals who practice an outdated colonialism...

A growing number of Indonesians recognise this failure, but the military apparatus maintains its position of control within Indonesian society.

International responsibility for this genocide is considerable. Countries which recognised and proclaimed "the inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence" have done nothing to turn this right into a reality.

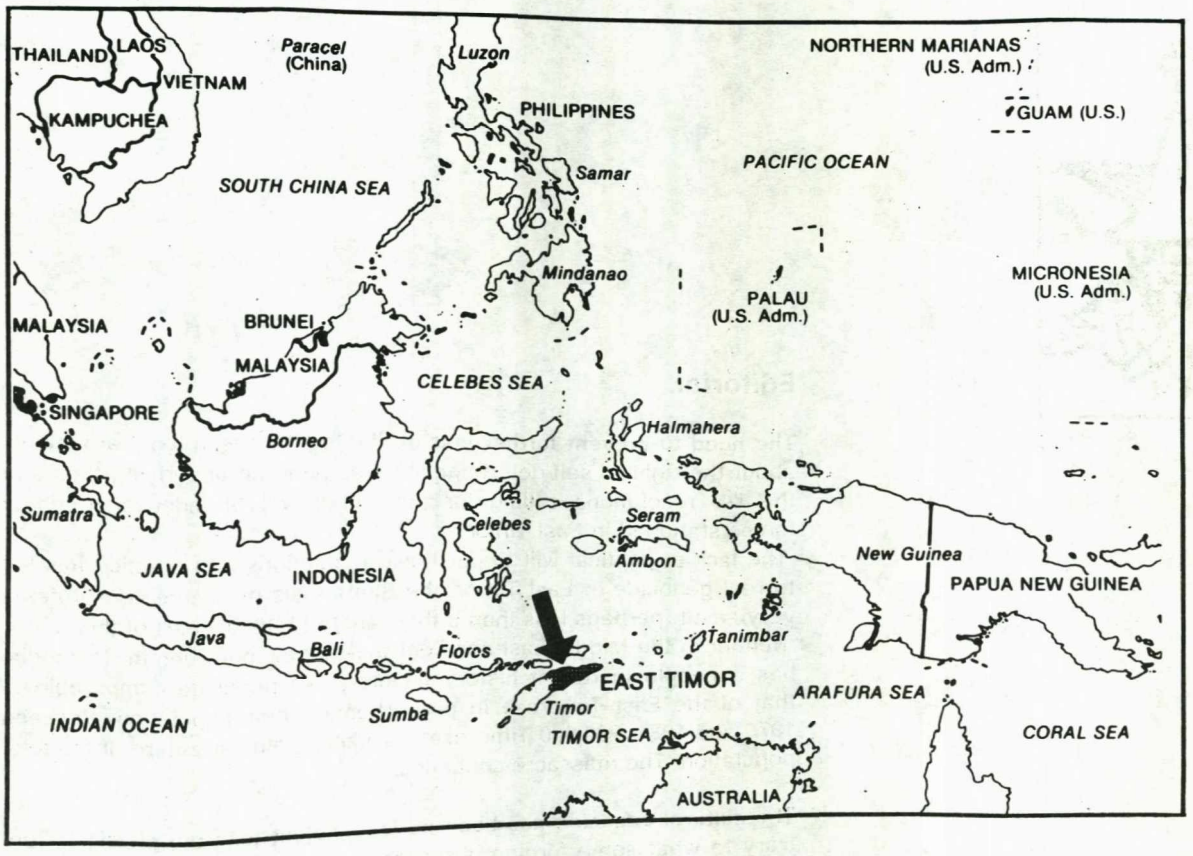
The Washington Post reminded us in a recent editorial that, for those in high places in the USA, the fight against communism was considered more important than this right of the East Timorese.

Australia nowadays has chosen to ignore this same right, for a few million barrels of petrol.

How many other countries place their commercial links with Indonesia above justice ?

The Timorese are still resisting, and they are still waiting for the United Nations to put its own resolutions into practice.

Peace is Possible in East Timor
Ecumenical Association



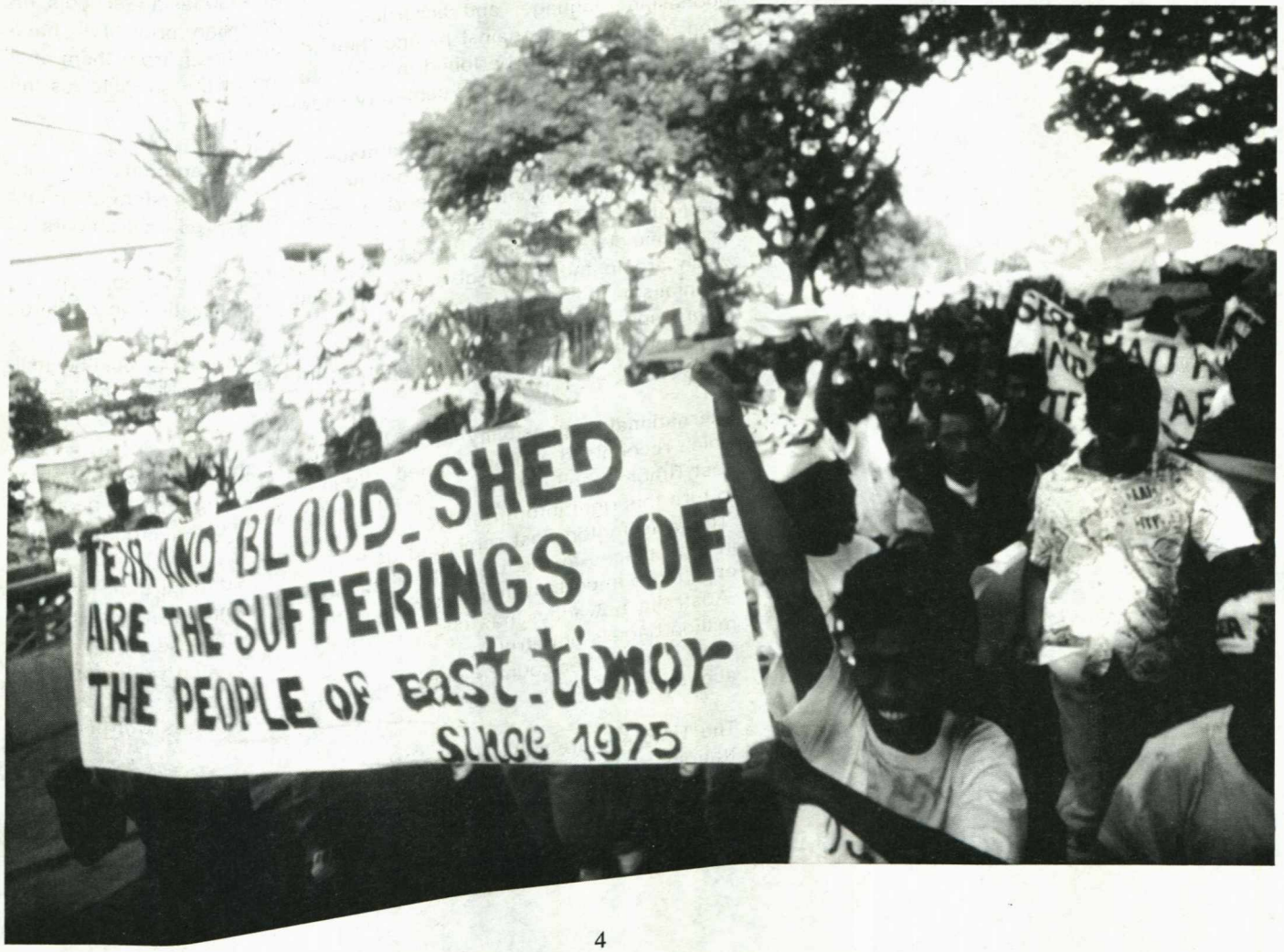
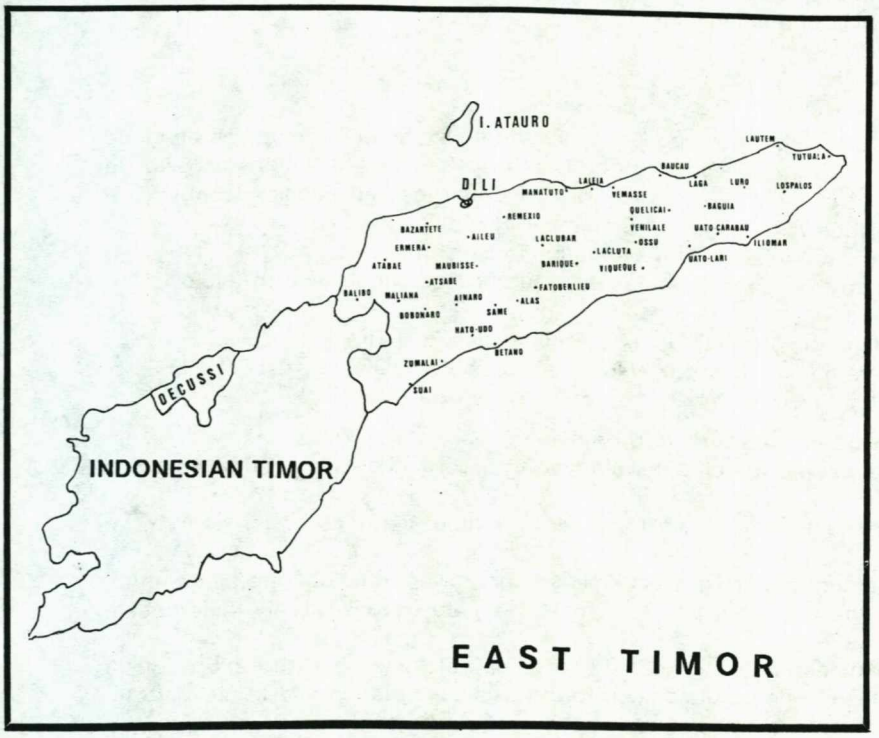


Photo Steve Cox / Independente

East Timor



18,989 km² - 650,000 inhabitants.

Lies between the Malay and Melanesian parts of the world 500 km north of Australia.

East Timor is the name given to just over half of the island of Timor, together with the Oecussi-Ambeno enclave, the island of Atauro and the islet of Jaco. The rest of the island of Timor (13,455 km²) is part of Indonesia.

The population was formed from ancient settlements: Malay, Melanesian and Polynesian. In contrast to the rest of Indonesia, it had hardly any contacts with Islam and Hinduism.

The Portuguese first landed there around 1560, but did not occupy it effectively until the beginning of the 20th century. At that time, the Dutch were colonising the neighbouring islands and the Western part of Timor.

The Dutch colony became independent in 1949 under the name of Indonesia: "Indonesia is the national political name for the former Dutch East Indies" stated the Indonesian representative to the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1954.

The overthrow of the dictatorship in Portugal, in April 1974, allowed East Timor to take the first steps towards independence. Adam Malik, Indonesian Foreign Minister, recognised their right to do this in a letter to Ramos Horta, a member of Fretilin, but by December he had changed his mind and stated that "there are only two possible solutions in East Timor: either union with Indonesia or the continuation of the Portuguese administration". President Suharto confirmed that "Timor shall not be independent" *(The Age, 10/07/75)*.

In August, a short but violent civil war erupted, bringing into conflict the two main Timorese parties, the UDT and Fretilin. The Portuguese Governor withdrew to the island of Atauro, along with the few dozen metropolitan soldiers at his disposal. By September, Fretilin was in control of the whole of the territory, and the fighting had led to the deaths of 1500 to 3000 Timorese; with around 30,000 taking refuge near the border, in Indonesian Timor.

When on 7 December 1975, Indonesia attacked the capital, Dili, and proceeded to take over the territory, the attitude of the USA, Australia and Great Britain was one of complacency.

In 1981, the local Catholic Church, taking a rough head-count, put the number of Timorese who had been victims of the occupation at around 300,000, out of a total population of 680,000 inhabitants. The majority of observers go along with Amnesty International in putting the figure at 200,000 dead; that is, almost one Timorese in three.

In 1983, the Indonesian army agreed to talks with Xanana Gusmao, the leader of the Resistance, but shortly after reverted to an annihilation policy by a military option.

In 1989, Indonesia began to allow access to the territory without the special authorization which had been essential up to then. The Timorese made the most of this opening to peacefully demonstrate at the visits of well-known figures: the Pope in October 1989, the US Ambassador in January and the Vatican representative in September 1990...

UN : "inalienable right to

The Secretary General of the UN, Perez de Cuellar, announced at the last session of the General Assembly of the United Nations that agreement had been reached between Portugal and Indonesia for the visit of a delegation of Portuguese parliamentarians to East Timor. This visit would constitute a step towards a "just, global and internationally acceptable" solution based on the UN resolutions.

The Security Council, (...)

- *Recognizing* the inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960,
- *Gravely concerned* at the deterioration of the situation in East Timor,
- *Gravely concerned* also at the lost of life and conscious of the urgent need to avoid further bloodshed in East Timor,
- *Deploring* the intervention of the armed forces of Indonesia in East Timor,
- *Regretting* that the Government of Portugal did not discharge fully its responsibilities as administering Power in the Territory under Chapter XI of the Charter,

1. *Calls upon* all States to respect the territorial integrity of East Timor, as well as the inalienable right of its people to self-determination in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV),
2. *Calls upon* the Government of Indonesia to withdraw without delay all its forces from the Territory,
3. *Calls upon* the Government of Portugal as administering Power do co-operate fully with the United Nations so as to enable the people of East Timor to exercise freely their right to self-determination,
4. *Urges* all States and other parties concerned to co-operate fully with the efforts of the United Nations to achieve a peaceful solution to the existing situation and to facilitate the descolonization of the Territory,
5. *Requests* the Secretary General to send urgently a special representative to East Timor for the purpose of making an on the spot assessment of the existing situation and of establishing contact with all the parties in the Territory and all States concerned in order to ensure the implementation of the present resolution, (...)

Resolution 384, of 22 December 1975)

The Security Council, (...)

- *Reaffirming* the inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960,
- *Believing* that all efforts should be made to create conditions that will enable the people of East Timor to exercise freely right to self-determination,
- *Noting* that the question of East Timor is before the General Assembly,
- *Conscious* of the urgent need to bring to an end the continued situation of tension in East Timor,

1. *Calls upon* all States to respect the territorial integrity of East Timor, as well as the inalienable right of its people to self-determination in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV),
2. *Calls upon* the Government of Indonesia to withdraw without further delay all its forces from the Territory,
3. *Requests* the Secretary General to have his special representative continue the assignment entrusted to him under paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 384 (1975) and pursue consultation with the parties concerned,
4. *Further requests* the Secretary General to follow the implementation of the present resolution and submit a report to the Security Council as soon as possible,
5. *Calls upon* all States and other parties concerned to co-operate fully with the United Nations to achieve a peaceful solution to the existing situation and to facilitate the descolonization of the Territory,
6. *Decides* to remain seized of the situation.

(Resolution 389, of 22 avril 1976)

self-determination and independence"

Having adopted each year between 1975 and 1981, resolutions in favor of self-determination for East Timor, all of which remained ineffective in the face of Indonesia's intransigence and the inaction of the member states, in 1982 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution which placed the question in the hands of the Secretary General:

The General Assembly,

- *Recognizing* the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination and independence in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in its resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and other relevant United Nations resolutions,
- *Having examined* the chapter of the report of the Special Committee on the situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to East Timor and other relevant documents,
- *Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the question of East Timor, (...)
- *Bearing in mind also* its resolutions 3485 (XXX) of 12 December 1975, 31/53 of 1 December 1976, 32/34 of 28 November 1977, 33/39 of 13 December 1978, 34/40 of 21 November 1979, 35/27 of 11 November 1980 and 36/50 of 24 November 1981,
- *Concerned* with the humanitarian situation prevailing in the Territory and believing that all efforts should be made by the international community to improve the living conditions of the people of East Timor and to guarantee to these people the effective enjoyment of their fundamental human rights,

1. *Requests* the Secretary General to initiate consultations with all parties directly concerned, with a view to exploring avenues for achieving a comprehensive settlement of the problem, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session;
2. *Requests* the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to keep the situation in the Territory under active consideration and to render all assistance the Secretary-General with a view to facilitating the implementation of the present resolution;
3. *Calls upon* all specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the World Food Program, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, immediately to assist, within their respective fields of competence, the people of East Timor, in close consultation with Portugal, as the administering Power (...).

(Resolution 37/30, of 23 November 1982)

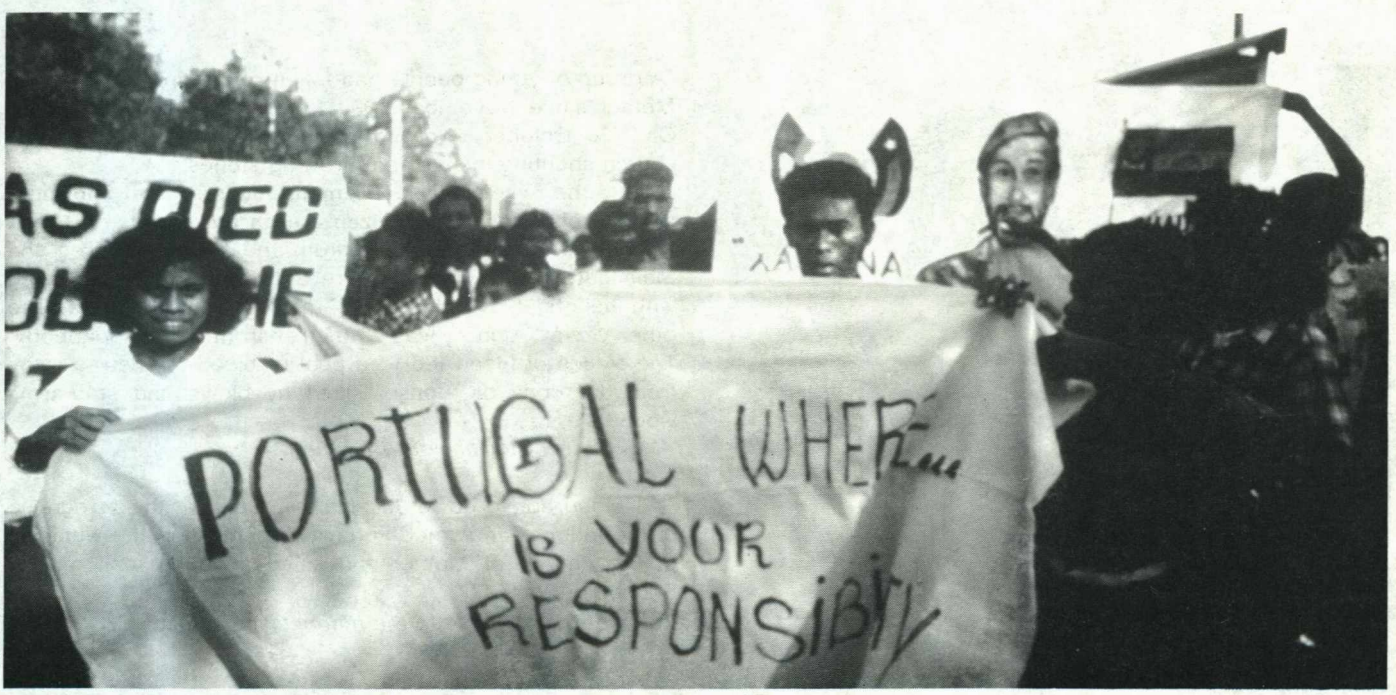


Photo Steve Cox / Independente

"A death threat on a national scale"

Placing the question in the hands of the Secretary General has meant there has scarcely been any progress on the matter. The inertia of the member States, and in particular those who hold positions of world power, has led to talks being extended, debates being adjourned, decisions being postponed ... The proposal for a visit to East Timor by Portuguese delegation, in response to an invitation from Indonesia, was a sign of the lack of political will to resolve the question according to the law and to the UN resolutions. The legitimate administrating power has been obliged to accept an invitation made by the occupying force, to attract international attention. However, in making this invitation under the auspices of the UN, the occupying force has itself implicitly recognized that an international problem remains in what they call their 27th province ! The Timorese "will see this visit as their last opportunity" to show their rejection of Indonesia, said the Indonesian-appointed governor, Mário Carrascalao. The Indonesians prepared the ground to prevent any demonstration.

"Nobody can speak, demonstrate, because if they do so, they will all be killed after the Portuguese return... **Only the presence of an international force..." could guarantee the security of the Timorese.**
(Mgr Belo - on TSF radio, October 91)

"At the end of October, a week before the date anticipated for the visit (...), I found out that **Indonesia had given the Timorese what could be called a death threat on a national scale:** the army had warned the Timorese that all those who spoke out would be killed after the delegation had left. Everywhere I went, I found Timorese against whom this threat had been made directly. The army had organized meetings for the people, in villages and small settlements, for which the speakers were military commanders and local Bupatis. This is how the population learnt that the soldiers were going to make lists of all those who approached the Portuguese, as well as those who chanted slogans against Indonesia during sessions and public meetings. When the delegation left, these people would be arrested, along with their families. (...)

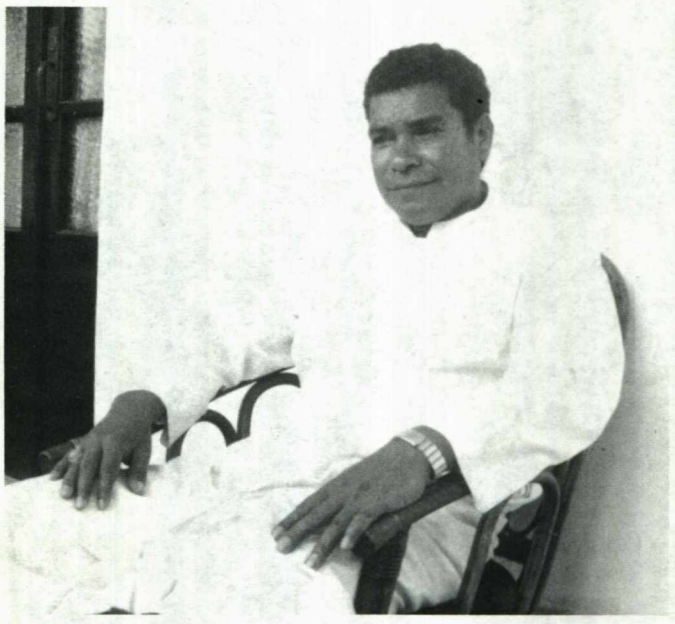
The soldiers went as far as informing the Timorese that mass graves for the massacre had already been opened. It is evident that the threats had been made systematically, in Dili and the whole of East Timor.

However, I met dozens of Timorese still waiting expectantly for the Portuguese delegation's visit. **The majority, although they were expecting a severe repression, thought that Timor had no other choice but to pay the price, however high, and even if it meant death.** They were ready to make this sacrifice because they believed sincerely that the visit would, in time, be followed by concrete action from Portugal and the UN, and lead to self-determination in East Timor".
*(Allan Nairn * - Expresso 30/11*
** see list of witnesses on page 18)*

Monday 28 October.

Two days after the announcement of the cancellation of the visit by the Portuguese parliamentarians, an incident in the church at Motael in Dili led to two deaths and around 50 arrests. Several of the people arrested have disappeared.

The Indonesian version of events attributes the start of the confrontation to some young people who were in the church, and reveals that the authorities later discovered flags, knives and iron bars in the church. Mgr Belo denies this: the provocation came from outside, Sebastiao was a victim of the Indonesian army and Afonso was killed far from the young people trapped in the church.



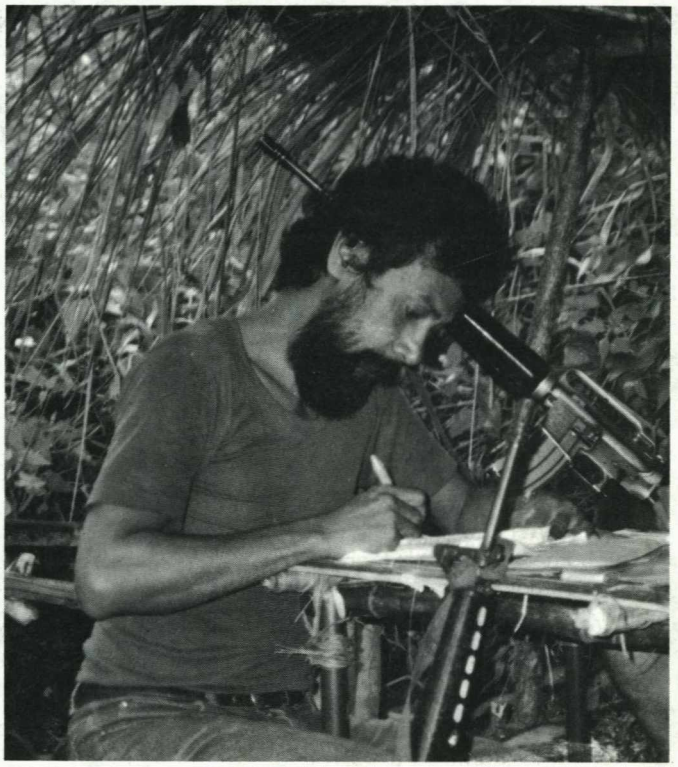
"A group of young people had taken refuge in the church at Motael since November 1990 for reasons of security. (...) On 28 October a group of individuals surrounded the church shouting insults and throwing stones.

At 2 a.m... when only policemen, soldiers, Intel informers and the occasional late citizen are on the streets, (...) men armed with pistols, coming from the beach, entered the main gate of the church where Sebastiao is killed, riddled with bullets; his body lay 18 metres from the gate. The other victim, Afonso, was 23 metres from Sebastiao's body. The traces of blood led to a pool of blood 57 metres away from the body of Afonso, killed by blows and stab-arms wounds"
(Mgr Belo - Official Note - 2/11/91)

"I decided not to go to Jakarta to protest at the arrogance of the Indonesian Armed Forces who smashed the windows of the church of Motael and killed a young man named Sebastiao Gomes".
(Mgr Belo, response to the Indonesian bishops)

We must fight for Timorese participation in the dialogue

under the auspices of the UN



With the cancellation of the visit by the Portuguese delegation, the Commander of the Timorese resistance believed that the visit by M. Kooijmans, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, could be the occasion for launching to the world the appeal that had been prepared for the Portuguese visit. A few days before the massacre in Dili cemetery, Xanana Gusmao sent a message to all those with positions of responsibility in the resistance:

Sixteen years of extremely hard, prolonged resistance. Sixteen years of struggle with hardly any perspective of advance, difficult times, always difficult; as will be the moment that approaches.

It has been sixteen years now, and there have been eight of deadlock since the Secretary General of the UN received a mandate from the General Assembly in resolution 37/30 to personally deal with the question. Eight years of deadlock because of Jakarta's inflexibility. Eight years of deadlock because of international complicity. (...)

It is up to us to forge a path through the present impasse to arrive at a more dynamic phase. (...)

Turning now to the PPD [*Portuguese Parliamentary Delegation*] visit...

The visit is within the framework of the UN Secretary General's mandate. Therefore, the PPD are not coming to resolve the question now. That is not the task they have been given, and is the responsibility, we feel, of the Executive, of the Portuguese government, and in the final analysis, the United Nations. Therefore, it must be understood that the PPD is not coming to stay now, it is not coming to chase away the Indonesians, it is not coming with armed forces to replace the occupying forces.

All the same, we must believe the PPD is coming to see the truth. We must believe that the Secretary General wants something positive. **The essential thing, we would say, is to give new life to the question of East Timor.** As for us, we must show this truth, we must ensure that this essential act, crucial to any tackling of the question from new perspectives, leads to a more favorable dynamic.

It is because of this that our action is indispensable, that we need to show the world that :

- backed by worldwide conspiracy, there has been an indecent lack of respect for the United Nations Charter;
- backed by international complicity, a people are being wiped out;
- backed by international indifference, international law and norms are tyranically trampled underfoot;
- backed by the political cynicism of many democratic governments, the universal principles and the resolutions of the General Assembly of the UN and the Security Council continue to be intolerably and abusively disrespected. (...)

We will fight for Timorese participation in the dialogue, under the auspices of the UN (...) Jakarta is worried, extremely worried (...) she has sent a shockingly large number of troops to defend the annexation. Yet, in East Timor they are really desperate. They know the inevitable will happen, they are blind with rage in the face of their powerlessness, they are blind with rage in the face of their imminent and humiliating defeat. (...) The first victims have unfortunately already appeared in Motael. **Will nothing stop their bloody rage? We will stop them by remaining serene.** It is difficult not to react, but we can't, we mustn't do it.

We shouldn't fear reprisals. The reprisals will be violent when we show how ineffective they are through our mass mobilization. Who, in the face of the massacre sixteen years ago, refused to fight?

We shouldn't let grief interfere with our vision. Let us open our eyes to the immense sadness of these sixteen years.

Let us not shelter behind fear of bloodshed. Let us think of the determination of our people.

Xanana Gusmão

Tuesday 12 November

In accordance with Timorese tradition, the mass of the 15th day for the soul of Sebastiao Gomes, killed on the 8 October, was celebrated at Motael church on 12 November. After the mass a funeral procession formed and moved towards the cemetery, passing through the center of the town. Chris Wenner's (Yorkshire Television) film shows that the procession rapidly transformed itself into a mixture of a religious and a political demonstration. There had been precedents in the demonstration which marked the end of the mass celebrated by Pope John Paul II in Dili on 12 October 1989 and also that of 4 December 1990, in the presence of the Papal Nuncio, on the fiftieth anniversary of the diocese of East Timor. Religious ceremonies are, in effect, the only authorized gatherings and the only places where the Timorese feel a certain protection.

The Indonesian soldiers claim that there were disturbances and provocations during the demonstration, which, they claim, explain the violent reaction of the soldiers at the gate to the cemetery. Mgr Belo refers to these statements, prefacing his remarks with a cautionary "It is said that..."; although he had sheltered 257 young people who took refuge with him after the massacre, he had not found any indications that the demonstrators had been armed. The Indonesian allegations are not only contradicted by all the foreign witnesses but also by the footage (film and photo) recorded at the time.

"Towards 6.30 a.m. on 12 November 1991, Tuesday, the mass of the 15th day took place for the soul of young Sebastiao Gomes, at his family's request. The mass was celebrated by Father Alberto Ricardo, priest of Motael parish. It was a simple mass, without hymns, without a sermon. After the mass the curate went home, unaware of anything that was about to happen.

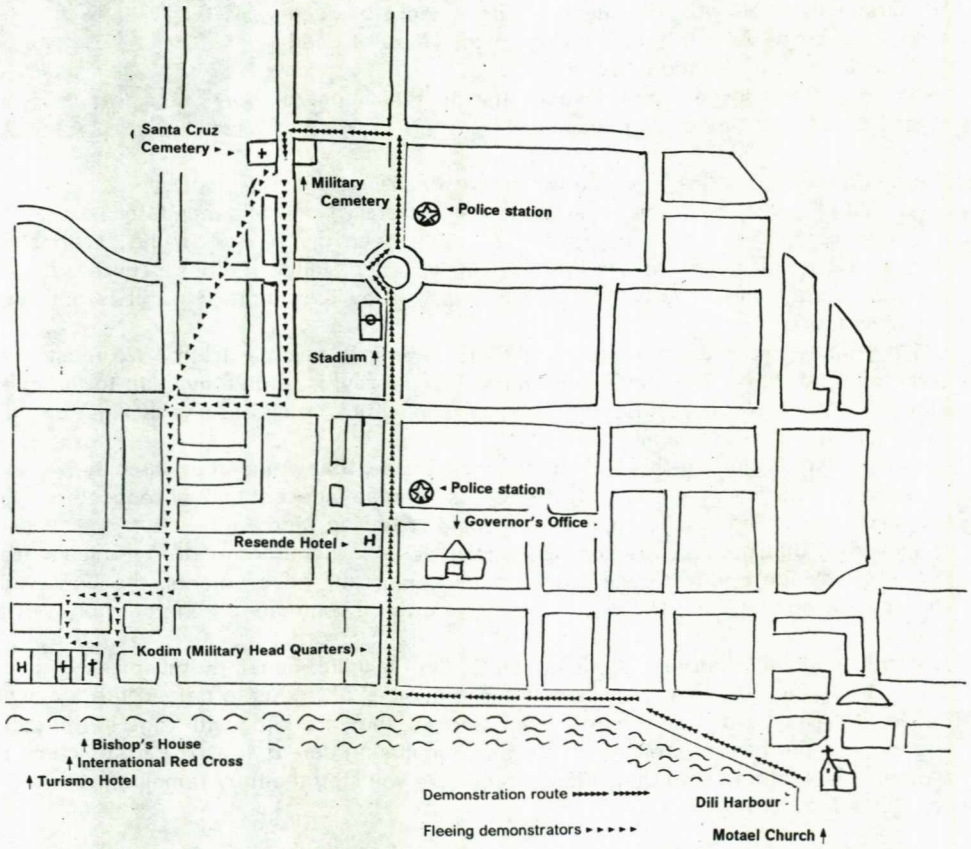
After the mass, a few worshipers returned home. During this time, in front of the church, the young people began to organize themselves and move towards the cemetery of Santa Cruz. Around 1000 people had taken part in the eucharist; now the young people shouted "vivas" and unfurled Fretilin and Portuguese flags and banners.

It is also said that there were provocations outside the Governor's palace, and a Major in the Indonesian army was injured (by knife wounds).

It is further claimed that at the police station, the young people threw a grenade which didn't go off. I asked several young people at Lecidere, and none of them saw this happen.

After passing the 'Taman Pahlawan' the young people shouted more and more 'vivas' : 'viva Sebastiao', 'viva East Timor', 'viva independence'. Some pupils from SMAK [*a Catholic middle school*], from SMPK [*a catholic primary school*] and from the diocese school, when they heard the shouts, came out of their classes and joined the procession".

(Mgr Belo - Official Note, 14/11)



a peaceful demonstration ends in a massacre

"The fact that these people were demonstrating constituted a challenge"

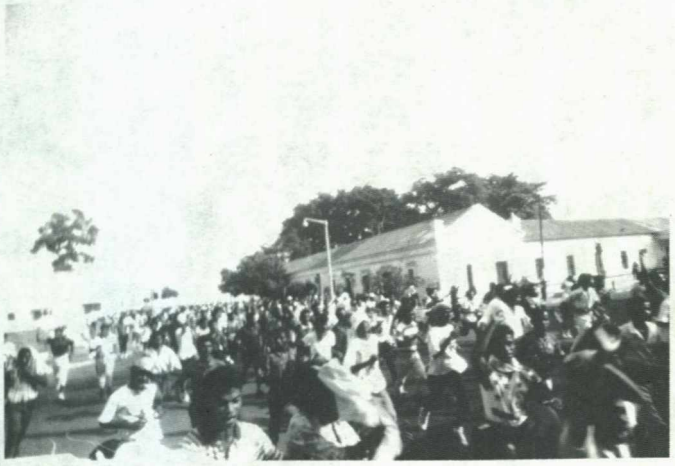


Photo Steve Cox / Independente

Photo Steve Cox / Independente

"All along the road you could see soldiers and Intel agents near the police station and army garrison. Many had long, wooden, polished batons which they swung while the Timorese marched.

The procession began outside the church. Sebastiao's family were there, with flowers to put on his grave. Many thousands of people had attended the mass. Some of them unfurled banners at the front of the march. **When they crossed the center of the town, the procession grew bigger. It was joined by people who came out of offices, schools and houses along the way. The intensity of the chanting and excitement increased as more and more demonstrators on the march defied the restrictions and raised their voices in protest.** There were many students and young people there, but also women and children in costumes, as well as elderly people in traditional Timorese dress.

When they passed by the soldiers, some of them shouted "Long Live East Timor" and made "V" for victory signs. The Timorese explained to me that this sign also meant "Peace". Making it in public was, in itself, a courageous political act. The banners carried appeals to Portugal, the UN and the USA. One of them criticised Colonel Gatot [*Chief of Intel Secret Services*], by name; others showed their support for the Pope, the Catholic Church, Falintil, Xanana, Fretilin and the UDT. Occasionally, the young people would become excited and start running, but the older ones bought them back under control, by shouting "discipline, discipline".

While the procession was advancing, the feeling that something important was taking place increased; that a courageous and unprecedented step in Timor's future had been taken. **In a country where the the right to free assembly and freedom of expression are denied by the occupying force and carry the death penalty, the fact that all these people were demonstrating in the streets and shouting criticisms of Indonesia, constituted a serious challenge to the State's rule of terror.** I remember wondering what the army's response would be."

(Allan Nairn - Expresso 30/11)

"... they waved the Fretilin and armed resistance (Falintil) flags and **banners calling for international assistance. 'Portugal where is your responsibility?' asked one in English. Others made reference to the US President and to Portugal.** Whenever the multitude passed a military or police post they waved the flags more vigorously and shouted louder. The atmosphere was getting more and more intense. Almost electric. And, although there was no obvious troop movement (apart from some soldiers inside the barracks or those who came out to watch what was happening)... But the procession had already passed in front of the Governor's Palace and euphoria was making the crowd break into a run. I ran also, trying to keep up always with the front line of the procession. Along the way, more people joined in the procession. Young children and youths for the most part. In all, I would say that there must have been about 6,000 people".

(Steve Cox - Independente 22/11)

After the arrival at the cemetery : "We are doing this so you understand".

Photo Steve Cox / Independente

When they reached the cemetery, the young people climbed the outside wall and unfurled banners. The footage shot by Chris Wenner and the banners in English and Portuguese are eloquent, but a young man approaches the camera and makes them even more explicit : "We are doing this so you understand" .
The soldiers surrounded the demonstrators whom they had allowed to go this far without hindrance.

"**When the crowd arrived at the cemetery, there were no soldiers to be seen.** Many people went into the cemetery, and headed towards Sebastiao's tombstone. In all, there must have been between 3000 and 5000 people near the entrance. A few young people jumped up onto the cemetery wall with their banners. The crowd occupied an area enclosed by walls on all sides: the Santa Cruz cemetery wall, high and made of cement, and the wall of the Indonesian military cemetery, lower, but right up against a fairly deep ditch. With several thousand people there, the area between the walls was full to bursting point. Even if they had wanted to, no one could have got out of the way quickly, but the procession had come to an end, and people were just waiting around before dispersing."
(Allan Nairn, Expresso 30/11)

"We soon arrived at the Santa Cruz cemetery. By now, the atmosphere could be described as frenetic. **The fact that nothing had happened, that nobody had arrested them, made everyone feel doubly confident.**
Still waving flags, the younger ones climbed the three - metre - high wall surrounding the cemetery. For an instant, the confusion of "Vivas", banners and arms in the air, abated for the young girls at the front of the procession to pass, carrying flowers to put on Sebastiao's grave. I went into the cemetery ahead of them, and stopped outside the chapel with them. I would guess that between 500 and 800 people had come through the gate, among whom were many 6 and 7 year old children. The others were outside".
(Steve Cox - Independente 22/11)

"It was a well-prepared trap" .
(Father Renato Stefani - Observer 17/11).

"The soldiers placed facing the crowd, raised their automatic rifles and began, systematically, to kill the escaping Timorese"

The Timorese were demanding, peacefully, their right to independence, recognized by the UN. The Indonesian soldiers took up position facing the demonstrators on the side of the entrance gate, while a smaller number proceeded to encircle them. Suddenly, without any warning, the army opened fire. The place offered no protection whatsoever apart from the cemetery itself. The gate was too narrow to allow the crowd to pass through quickly which gave the Indonesian soldiers time to hit a still undetermined number of Timorese. The figures provided by the Indonesian authorities vary between 13 and 50. Between 50 and 180 according to foreign sources, without counting the injured who died later.

"Around 7.45, when the procession was entering the cemetery, a green lorry appeared, carrying armed soldiers, which stopped at the crossing near the SDK [*a Catholic kindergarten*].
The young people continued to shout 'vivas' and then shots rang out, aimed at the young people and students. Many people were hit, others crossed the cemetery and ran towards Bemori. Others remained trapped in the cemetery. **No warning shot had been heard,** neither in the air or on the ground. The shots were aimed at the people present (in the crowd)".
(Mgr Belo - Official Note 14/11)

"A few minutes had passed when, suddenly, someone noticed that one of the exits was blocked by an Indonesian troop carrier. The truck was full of heavily-armed soldiers, dressed in green, with red bands on their berets. At that moment, we saw a large column of soldiers coming from the right along a parallel path. They were wearing light-brown uniforms and carried loaded M-16's.
The soldiers marched, determined, in well - ordered ranks at a slow, disciplined pace. As they approached, we could see that there were hundreds of them. In the crowd, many people seemed paralysed with shock, while others tried to get away slowly.
I placed myself between the soldiers and the Timorese, together with Amy Goodman, a WBAI-Pacific radio reporter.
I was totally sure the Indonesian force wouldn't attack if they saw foreigners there. (...) **Suddenly, we were face to face with them and watching the impossible: the soldiers placed themselves facing the crowd, raised their rifles, and began, systematically, to kill the escaping Timorese".**
(Allan Nairn, Expresso 30/11)

"They grabbed me by the hair and, dragging me along the ground, began beating me with M-16 rifle butts and punching and kicking me. When this happened, Allan Nairn tried to protect me and was also beaten. They put rifles to our heads and I thought they were going to kill us. We began shouting 'please, don't kill us, we are American'. (...)
That worked ! The others, the Timorese and a journalist, weren't so lucky".
(Amy Goodman - Publico 13/11)

"When the demonstrators arrived at the cemetery the soldiers arrived behind them and began unloading troops from the trucks. At 8 a.m. they formed a line and started jogging towards us. People began to move away from them and then the soldiers opened fire. There was a rain of bullets, rapid machine gun fire for two or three minutes as they chased demonstrators. As people were fleeing, a lot would have been shot in the back".
(Russell Anderson - Sunday Territorian).

"When several hundred mourners were inside and hundreds of others were hurrying to get in, **the army opened fire for two or three minutes, reloaded their rifles when they were empty. Perhaps a thousand rounds were fired".**
(Bob Muntz - Reuter 15/11)

"I was in the cemetery when the shooting started outside its walls, where some 2,000 people were on the street, waiting to file through the gate (...) I was knocked to the ground and trampled in the stampede for the safety of the cemetery chapel. I scrambled for cover among the tombstones and dust as screams filled the air.
The scene at the cemetery gate was frozen into my mind. A young man, badly wounded but still not dead, lay across the entrance. Others had tripped and fallen in the dirt. **A solid wedge of people were stuck in the entrance, pressed from behind by hundreds of others desperate to escape the bullets.** Then the wedge broke, and the people poured screaming through the gap, trampling over the bodies,the wounded and the whole alike.
Outside in the street, **the soldiers kept up a sustained volley of fire, perhaps two minutes long - thousands of rounds poured into the crowd and down into the cemetery where I was hiding.** Then there was a pause, with sporadic fire, and then another volley shorter than the first, and then more sporadic shots as the soldiers moved, in ordered ranks, to surround the cemetery and trap those inside".
(Chris Wenner - Público 21/11)

"At first sight, it looked like the boys were jumping down from the wall. However, I remember wondering whether they hadn't in fact fallen, and for a few seconds, I found that strange. I was trying to get through the human wall around me to try and find out what was happening when, all of a sudden, I heard a loud noise which didn't stop. At the beginning I didn't understand what was happening. (...) **The shots continued without stopping for two to three minutes, which seemed like an eternity to me.**
I had lost sight of Chris Wenner and knew only that he was inside the cemetery. With me in the chapel were some young girls and boys and two children of about six or seven who clung to each other just behind me, in a corner. They were praying too and making the sign of the cross. There was blood on the ground and I realized some of them had been fatally wounded.
For a moment, I took a chance and looked out of one of the slits that acted as windows in the chapel. I saw Chris, sheltering behind a tomb, his camera near him, he was filming"
(Steve Cox - Independente 22/11)

"The young people who couldn't escape

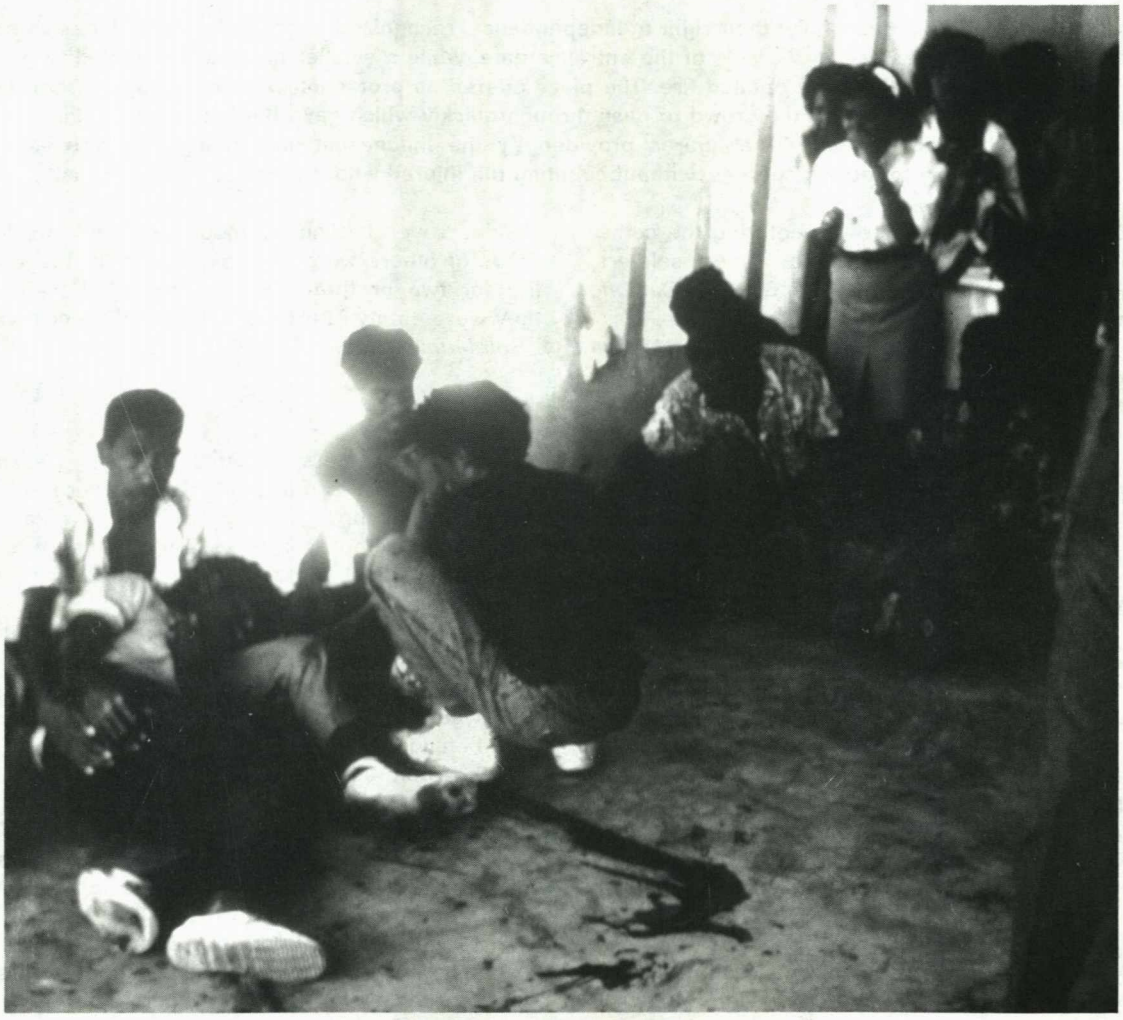


Photo Steve Cox / Independente

Victims :

- DEAD : Eye witnesses saw fifty (50) bodies (corpses) being thrown, like objects, into two trucks; a reliable witness said that the corpses thrown unceremoniously into the cars numbered 80, and others were thrown into bags (Carol).
  In the middle of the garden, many young people had been hit and killed. It was a horrific scene. A nurse is reported to have spotted 72 corpses !!!

- INJURED : **The young people who hadn't been able to escape were savagely beaten: punches, kicks, bayonets, and some knifed to death in cold blood, in the stomach,in the chest, etc...**
  The injured, those I saw for myself in the military hospital in Lahane, numbered 90, all in a critical condition !!!

- even now the corpses have not been returned to the families.
  (Mgr Belo - Official Note, 14/11)

"Those who had fallen were left to bleed where they lay (...) **Inside the cemetery, I saw soldiers clearly commanded by officers in civilian dress, moving methodically between the tombstones, searching out wounded and fugitive demonstrators. As they got to them, they kicked them and beat them, severely wounded and unhurt alike with rifle butts and batons.** I was filming all this, ignoring the shouts and the pointed fingers of the soldiers, who had now mainly stopped firing, but were not yet, in this methodical scheme, allowed to get to me in the center of the cemetery.

Several young people gathered around me, thinking that I, a foreigner, might offer some protection. One had blood pouring out of his stomach, another used a shirt to bandage a lower leg in tatters, a third was simply paralyzed with fear. He repeated over and over again: "We're going to die, we're all dead, I'm going to die, please help me mister, you must not leave us, you must take us with you mister, or we're all dead". But I couldn't help them. **All I could do was bury my videotape in a grave in anticipation of my own arrest,** and promise them that this time, the cynical carnage of the Indonesian military would not be lost in a welter of international evasion and Indonesian lies, as has happened so often in the last 16 years of East Timor's history, during which nearly one in three of its people - roughly 200,000 out of a population of 650,000 - have died. In this, the presence of seven foreign witnesses may help."
(Chris Wenner - Público 21/11)

were subject to the most savage beatings"

Photo Yorkshire TV

"When the rifles were silent, I looked outside again. In groups of five, the Indonesian soldiers were walking round the cemetery. You could hear shots from time to time. That's how they put an end to the cries of the wounded.

I put my camera in the bag. All I had to do was wait. Suddenly, the door of the chapel opened. Chris Wenner couldn't get in. A group of soldiers dragged him outside and started hitting him. A few minutes later, some others arrived and my sheltering companions got the same treatment.

Then it was my turn. I remember the time exactly, it was 8.30 in the morning. (...) I felt the rifle butts, bayonets and knives on my back, stomach and neck. **The officer in civilian clothes kept shouting at me: 'What are you doing here ? I've saved your life. This is none of your business. You've seen everything'** (...) they continued to beat me all along the path until they got me into a truck. (...) For no reason at all, the Indonesian soldier continued to beat me in the truck".

(Steve Cox - Independente 22/11)

Photo Steve Cox / Independente

"Many young people who were already in the cemetery tried to escape out the other side by climbing the walls, but a massive execution had been planned, and when they reached the top of the wall they were hit by more shots, from the Indonesians hiding in the neighboring gardens (...)

The corpses were dragged along the ground, then two men took the bodies and threw them into the trucks; up on top, two other men shoved the corpses around with their feet to make enough space. Counting, by several witnesses was easy, reaching as many as 50 (fifty).

The corpses continued to come. They were also bought out from inside the cemetery, or taken from the gardens bordering the cemetery on both sides.

Up until 9.15, at least 3 "Hino" trucks left Santa Cruz loaded with corpses piled on top of each other.

There in Santa Cruz, the orders that were given had originated from the Panglima [*Gen Warouw*].

Around as late as 9.10, a young person tried to escape, running through the military cemetery. Two soldiers followed him and fired shots at the ground. The young man stopped, one of the soldiers ran, caught up, and gave the young man a mighty kick in the back, making him fall head down to the ground. Reinforcements from the 744 Battalion had arrived a few minutes earlier, dressed in camouflage and in position with their rifles loaded. Seeing the soldier was not shooting the young man, they shouted out in protest.

One or two of the Indonesians felt an inner revolt at such an excess of brutality, from the planned massacre to the repeated knifings. Seeing these calm and beautiful faces (they say) they regretted all that had happened.

The Indonesians undressed the corpses, even those of the New-Zealander and the young women students, and burnt the clothes. Rosaries and religious artifacts fell out of some pockets; even some student cards... Domingos dos Santos [*boy from Ermera*], Olinda Marques [*girl from Iliomar*] ...".

(written account by eye witness passed on by a priest who cannot be identified - 20/11).

Poursuits and massacres continues:

The massacre didn't stop at the entrance to the cemetery. Some witnesses claim that houses within a radius of 500 meters were raided to see if they were sheltering demonstrators who might have escaped, and the reprisals extended to people who had sheltered them. They later extended to include the whole town, because the information services had long lists of suspects.

Some of the wounded who went to civilian hospitals (the public one and the one in the parish of Motael), were sent instead to the military hospital and are now in prison. 14 of them died on the first day. Domingos Oliveira, a Timorese leader living in Australia, reports that an unidentified Indonesian military doctor gave the figure of 183 fatally wounded.

Although most of the foreign witnesses left Dili soon after the massacre, Anthony Balmain, who was in East Timor on the 12 November, but outside Dili, came back to the capital and didn't leave East Timor until a few days later. He confirms other reprisals outside Dili, and another massacre in Dili on 15th November.

After the last journalists left and surveillance measures were stepped up, almost complete silence fell. Executions or disappearances have been reported in Lospalos, Baucau, Fatumaca, Ossu, Viqueque, Suai, Zumulai, Ainaro, Maubisse, and Maliana, but there is no detailed information.

"For the rest of the morning we continued to hear gun shots in other parts of the city"
(Amy Goodman - Público 13/11).

"**A Timorese witness saw soldiers enter houses near the cemetery, accusing the occupants of hiding people and shooting entire families.** The shots outside the cemetery took place within a perimeter of 500 meters to the North and South.

I spoke to some people who saw, during the rest of the day and night, people being arrested whom even now have not been found. (...)

Timorese have not just disappeared in Dili. We have heard about similar situations in the town of Baucau, where 25 people disappeared before the massacre and 40 after.

In Ainaro, according to a member of the local religious community, the whereabouts of between 75 and 80 Timorese, two of them have already disappeared after the 12th November massacre.

Lospalos, in the Eastern tip of Timor, is another place where disappearances have occurred since the Dili massacre, 18 in this case".
(Anthony Balmain - Público 25/11)

"**During the night of the 13th, covered "Unimogs" were parked near the infirmary where the wounded were. At a certain time, all the lights went out, even in the town.** You could hear groans from the infirmary and the "Unimogs"... the Unimogs went away. (...) because each survivor was a witness; because many of the wounded were already on the 'black list'; because each Indonesian knows that the Indonesian Government would like to execute all those who do do not support integration".
(written account by eye witness, passed on by a priest who cannot be identified)

New group massacres.

"The 15th November, just before midday, there was a massacre in Be-Mussi, near Comoro, on the outskirts of Dili. **I heard gunfire from automatic weapons which echoed round the valley for roughly 45 seconds. Then, for the next 30 seconds, I only heard sporadic gunfire. I spoke to a Timorese who saw trucks full of people taken to be executed.** He estimated that between 60 and 80 Timorese were taken in 4 trucks to be executed and then buried".
(Anthony Balmain - Público 25/11) Sunday 17th, towards midnight, **10 people were massacred, apparently because they had witnessed the massacre on the 15th in Be-Mussi.** Subsequent information (Expresso 11/1/92) identifies one of the victims as Francisco Vilanova (22) and indicates pregnant women were amongst the others victims.

Monday 18th, **seven people, 5 women and two children** (Inês da Silva Soares, 29; Maria da Fatima, 19; Liberata Mendes, 17; Teresita,17) **were killed, apparently because they had witnessed the massacre the day before.**
(Timorese resistance source, Público 25/11)

(The Age 16/11/91)

Arrests in Indonesia

The 19th November, a hundred or so people, the majority of them Timorese students in Indonesia took part in a peaceful demonstration in front of the United Nations in Jakarta. They were protesting against the 12th November massacre and demanding the withdrawal of Indonesian Armed Forces from East Timor: 70 were bundled forcibly into trucks. "We have already released 49, but 21 are still being questioned" stated General Try Sutrisno on the 26th November, but those who are still in detention have undergone rough treatment. Colonel Wagiman, police Commander, has let it be known that the prisoners have been accused of crimes against State security, which carries a jail sentence of 7 years, but that some may be accused of subversion, which could lead to the death penalty.

For the new Military Commander of Dili, General Theo Syafei, **"the November incident might reflect the peoples' aspirations, but it was a rebellion"**. It is this type of logic and conception of legality that forms the basis of the trials Indonesia is carrying out or preparing. Can the Timorese be tried for rebellion against Indonesia when it's Indonesia who is breaking international laws and UN resolutions? Shouldn't the international community, who condemned the expulsion of the Palestinians from territories occupied by Israel, deny Indonesia the right to try the inhabitants of the Timorese territory they are occupying illegally in the same way ?

On the 24th November, some other Timorese students were arrested in Bali (6), Subaraya (6) and Bandoung (9).

In Bali, soldiers in civilian dress turned up at a house where 6 Timorese students were living, under the false pretext of praying according to Hindu custom, but armed secret agents, who had surrounded the house, took advantage of the situation to storm the house and take away the six students along with material (TV, radio, tapes,telephone) and documents. Other soldiers entered the apartment and planted grenades, after which they forced other Timorese students to come and witness the grenades in their colleagues' house in order to charge them.The detained students have not been allowed to receive visits from lawyers of their choice, or family.

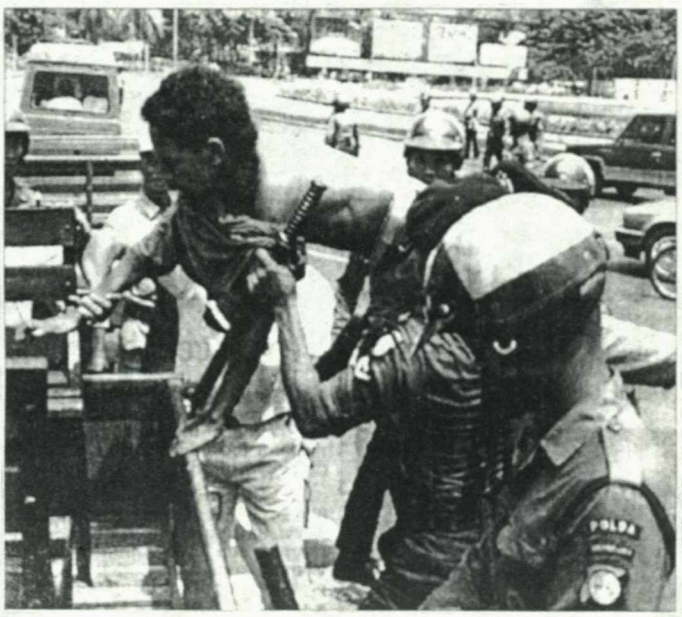


Photo Reuter

Demonstrator picked up by police, in Jakarta.

January 1992 - death squads

At the beginning of January, Mgr. Belo stated in an telephone interview (Expresso 11/1/92), that calm had still not returned to Dili. The town was "taken" by groups of masked and armed civilians, made up of Timorese and Indonesians. They **"attacked the houses of people considered to be favorable to the resistance and badly treated the people they found there"** said the Bishop.

Photo Yorkshire TV

Fr Ricardo, submitted to prolonged interrogation

A few minutes before this telephone call, he said, he had a visit from a mother: **"another mother came to the episcopal residence to say her son had been hit in the street, and left almost dead"**. When the journalist asked the name of the young man, the line went dead.

A few weeks beforehand, the newspaper Kompas had asked General Warouw if it was true that armed, masked groups were terrorizing Dili. The Military Commander replied cynically **"I've never seen them, so I don't know if they really exist. Maybe they are only rumors"** *(Kompas 24/11)*.

Father Ricardo, General Vicar of the diocese, and priest of the parish of Motael, was subject to numerous interrogations **"which went on for 9 hours"**, and he found himself in a state of mental and physical exhaustion.

In his Christmas message, Mgr. Belo said what the Timorese were feeling, but only he, because of his social position, could express:

"We all feel involved, with our children and friends wounded, imprisoned and killed. We live in an atmosphere of terror. There is no respite. (...)

Before finishing, the Bishop reminds you that he's praying for you, he's with you, suffers with you, is together with you, lives or dies with you".

The foreign witnesses:

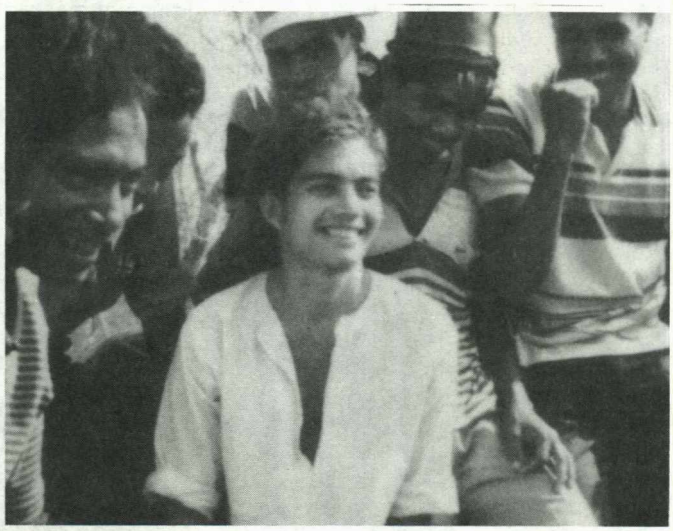
1. **Allan Nairn (USA)**. Freelance journalist, working on the New Yorker, present throughout the demonstration; injured by blows received at the entrance to the cemetery (fractured cranium).
2. **Amy Goodman (USA)**. Journalist from WBAI-Pacific Radio (New York); present throughout the demonstration and manhandled at the entrance to the cemetery.
3. **Chris Wenner (GB)**. Journalist for Yorkshire Television; filmed the mass, demonstration and inside of the cemetery. Arrested and detained, his last film was taken from him by the soldiers, but he had hidden the first one in the cemetery and got it back later that night.
4. **Steve Cox (GB)**. Photo-journalist; present at the demonstration then hid himself in the cemetery chapel, was arrested and beaten.
5. **Russell Anderson (Australia)**. Journalist; accompanied the demonstration, and was outside the cemetery when the shooting started.
6. **Bob Muntz (Australia)**. Member of Community Aid Abroad, South-East Asian team, accompanied the demonstration and was outside the cemetery when the shooting started. Hit by a bullet.
7. **Saskia Kowenberg (Holland)**. Journalist, did not follow the demonstration, went to the cemetery when the shooting broke out.
8. **Renato Stefani (Japan)**. Catholic missionary of Italian origin. Present in Dili, he only arrived at the cemetery after the massacre.
9. **Anthony Balmain (Australia)**. Journalist, was in East Timor but not in Dili on 12 November.When he arrived back in Dili, he heard the shots and got together eyewitness accounts of the later massacre on 15 November.

By chance there were foreign witnesses...

Without the presence of foreign witnesses, without the images they were able to bring back, the 12 November massacre in Dili would have remained just another massacre amid so many others. International public opinion would have known nothing and the majority of Governments would have been able to feign ignorance about what was happening in East Timor, as they have been doing for the last 16 years.

If, indeed, it was Timor's isolation and the absence of media coverage that allowed Indonesia to carry out a veritable genocide without public outcry abroad, then the reaction of the Indonesian authorities towards the journalists - denying their presence, rejecting their reports and even accusing them of being themselves responsible for the events they had witnessed - becomes more understandable.

East Timor was already known as one of the places in the world where journalists came up against most obstacles in doing their job; now Indonesia promises to make things even more difficult.



- **Kamal Bamadhaj (New Zealand)**. Student at Sydney University (Australia). Bahasa Indonesian interpreter for Bob Muntz. Hit by bullets at the entrance to the cemetery, the Indonesian soldiers delayed him being taken to Dili Hospital by Anton Marti, International Red Cross representative. Died in hospital.

and the Indonesian representatives:

- **Rudini** . Interior Minister
- **Ali Alatas**. Foreign Minister
- **General Benny Murdani**. Defence Minister.
- **General Try Sutrisno**. Chief-of-Staff of Indonesian Armed Forces.
- **General Sintong Panjaitan** Commander of 9th Military Region in Bali, which includes Timor.
- **Lieutenant-colonel Anton Tampodang**. Spokesperson for the 9th Military Region Command.
- **General Rudolph Warouw**. Military Commander of East Timor.
- **Mario Carrascalão**. Timorese, Governor of East Timor, nominated by the Indonesian occupying force.
- **Roni Sikap Sinuraya**. Director General of Immigration.

"**There were no foreign journalists in East Timor** on the 12 to see what happened" *(Rudini - Interior Minister).*

"If the foreign press is talking about 100 deaths, I can say this number is exaggerated"
(General Try Sutrisno - Press Conference at Presidential Palace 13/11 - Kyodo 13/11)

"**The news in the foreign press is inaccurate**"
(Ali Alatas - Djakarta 15/11)

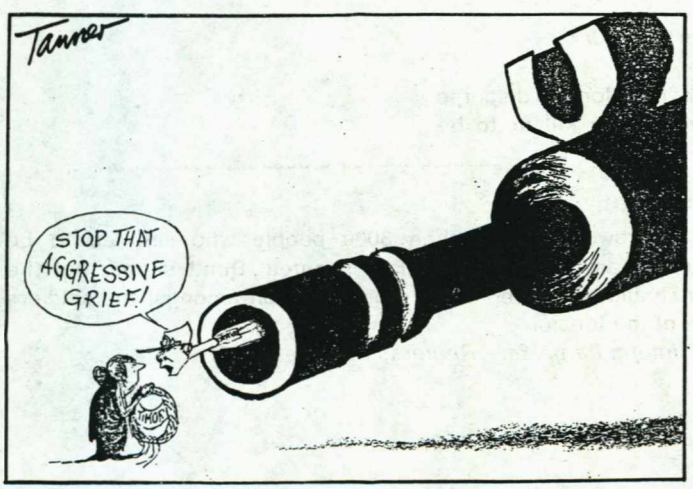
"**The two** [*American*] **journalists are suspected of taking part in the incident in Dili... they abused their visas because they carried out journalistic activities during their stay in Indonesia**".
(Roni Sikap Sinuraya - The Nation - Bangkok, 5/12)

"The five foreign journalists are implicated in the incidents...and forbidden from entering Indonesia"
(General Try Sutrisno - The Nation, Bangkok, 5/12)

"The inflammatory effect of the presence of the journalists on the behavior of the demonstrators is well- known".
(Jakarta Post, Far Eastern Economic Review, 5/12)

"Perhaps it's preferable to close the border again. **Since the opening up of the territory, chaos has settled in. If it remains open, the chaos will continue. A visit from a UN team would only create confusion**"
(M.Carrascalão - Editor, quoted in Público 10/12)

"**Vigilance of foreign visitors to East Timor should be stepped up right away** and, if it is proved they are not ordinary tourists, they should be prevented from entering the territory".
(Foreign Minister - Report on the visit by Prof. Kooijmans)



The Indonesian authorities have no difficulty in agreeing to blame the foreign journalists, but it has not been altogether easy to construct a credible version of events which would convincingly:

- **reduce the scale of the massacre,**
- **discredit all the witnesses,**
- **justify the undeniable.** ⇒

So-called provocations...

The Indonesian authorities looked for reasons which could serve to justify the seriousness of the massacre in the eyes of their allies. Even if it were plausible that the 6 foreign journalists who accompanied the demonstration might not have witnessed an isolated act of provocation, the abundance of facts presented made that impossible. Wanting to prove too much, the Indonesian authorities ended up discrediting themselves.

The report by the Foreign Ministry, presumably, had to make a choice, the least credible justifications had to be abandoned:

- The misunderstood order given to the subordinates *(Generals Panjaitan and Warouw)*;

- The presence of about a hundred clandestine separatists armed with Portuguese rifles *(Colonel Tampodang)*;

- The death of an Indonesian Officer *(Ali Alatas)*.

Are the remaining facts truer or merely less obviously false ?

- All the foreign witnesses have denied that soldiers were injured by blunt instruments or the throwing of stones in route but an isolated incident may have occurred without being witnessed by them.

- The throwing of a grenade that didn't explode at the entrance to the cemetery; shots which did not hit anyone; threatening crowd movements towards hundreds of soldiers...armed with automatic weapons; surely all of these could not have passed unseen by the foreign witnesses present at the scene. All of them deny these events.

What confidence does an official report from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs merit *(the report on the visit by Prof. Kooijmans)* **which still maintains the figure of 20 dead, a figure later corrected to 50.**

Indeed, what confidence does the figure of 50 merit ?

"On the way to the Santa Cruz cemetery, the demonstrators unfurled Fretilin flags and carried banners, pointed instruments and long knives, provoking security personnel. The security personnel persuaded the demonstrators to stay calm. Lots of them were so restless, **they seriously injured a Major**, second-in-command in the Battalion. Apparently, this brutal act forced the security forces to react".
(Press Note from the Indonesian Ambassador in Australia - The Age 14/11)

"The incident began when the army discovered that **more than 100 clandestine separatists, armed with Portuguese-made G3 rifles and grenades,** had come to Dili to join the demonstrators".
(Lt-Colonel A.Tampodang - Berita Buana newspaper, Jakarta 13/11, quoted by Reuters and The Age 14/11)

"The crowd were ~~extremely~~ and persistently restless. **They began throwing stones at houses, shouting slogans and waving flags. A representative of the Military Command** (Major G. Lantara) made an effort to calm the crowd but he was punched and taken to hospital where he died later. (...) The Indonesian Armed Forces are totally disciplined, but **fire bombs and several grenades came out at them from the procession**".
(Ali Alatas in Seoul - The Age 15/11)

"In front of the cemetery, **a grenade was thrown at the soldiers but it didn't explode. The demonstrators advanced threateningly and the soldiers had to defend themselves**"
(Ali Alatas - interview on RTP 10/12)

The troops in Dili acted only after efforts at persuading the demonstrators to disperse had failed and the soldiers had been attacked. **"The only order is to kill or to be killed".**
(General Sintong Panjaitan - The Age 14/11)

"Finding himself facing a crowd of more than 3000 people who seemed to be advancing in a threatening manner, **a young officer shouted 'Don't shoot', but the soldiers understood they should open fire**. There was confusion amongst the soldiers who opened fire because of the tension".
(Generals Warouw and Sintong Panjaitan - Reuters, The Age 15/11)

"There was no good reason for the shooting".
(Mario Carrascalão, Gouvernor of East Timor - Agence Lusa, Público 14/11)

and truly provocative statements!

The procession **"was causing chaos"**, carrying banners with anti-Government slogans and shouting **"many unacceptable ideas"**. In response shots were fired in the air **"but they continued their disorder. The army cannot be underestimated. Finally we had to shoot over them. Delinquents like these agitators must be shot, and they will be, whenever that is necessary"**. The Army Information Center in Dili knew they were prepared to demonstrate from the time of the visit of the Portuguese parliamentarians. **"Now the situation is under control. ABRI** [*Indonesian Armed Forces*] **is determined to eliminate anyone who disrupts stability"**
(General Try Sutrisno, at an Officers meeting at the National Defense Institute - Lemhanas - Jayakarta 14/11, quoted in the Guardian and Amnesty International 21/11)

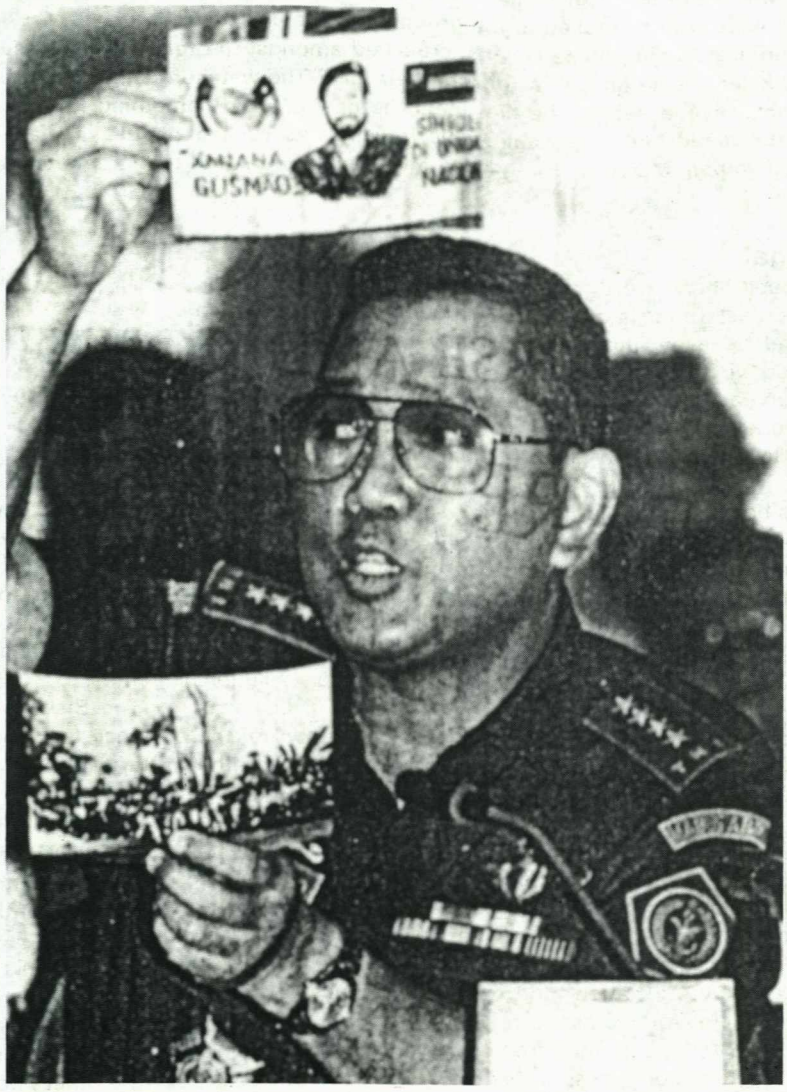


Photo Reuter

"It was an enemy demonstration, that is clear. They were carrying Fretilin flags and pictures of Xanana. (...) I think you would not want to see our Armed Forces disarmed by this populace".
(General Try Sutrisno, to the Indonesian Parliament - Reuter 27/11)

"In a military operations zone, the duty of every soldier is to destroy the enemy"
(General R. Warouw - Editor, quoted in Expresso 14/12)

Such threats are not new, General Benny Murdani, Defense Minister, had already made them before, after a visit by the Ambassador of the USA to Dili in January 1990.

"I have already told you, if you attempt to organize your own State, and if the movement is strong, sufficiently strong, it will be crushed by ABRI. ABRI might fail the first time, but it will try again a second and third time. There have already been more important rebellions, there have been more important differences of opinion with the Government than this small number of people who call themselves Fretilin. Whoever their sympathizers are, **we'll crush them all! I repeat, we'll crush them all!"**
(General Benny Murdani -
speech given to Timorese local government workers, Dili 3/2/90)

The world discovers the Timor's hell!

It was the regular army firing hundreds or thousands of rounds of bullets into a peaceful and defenseless crowd, and in the presence of foreign journalists, that finally drew world attention to East Timor. During 16 years the territory had been the site of a genocide which had remained outside of the mainstream of world opinion because the Indonesian military had succeeded in isolating Timor, and those governments who were aware of the situation, were more concerned with their economic or strategic links with Indonesia.

The film of the massacre was what changed the situation. The witnesses described and it was seen graphically on film, the jubilation of the young people that they had managed to come together to demonstrate, without being opposed by either the army or the police. With foreign journalists present they hoped that their message would be heard on the outside and that the world would start to be aware of their situation. The images clearly contradict the Indonesian version of a "menacing crowd". The film, shot from inside the cemetery while the shooting was taking place outside the gates, puts the viewer foursquare in the midst of some of the most violent scenes. We see the wounded run past and then from afar the troops beating those who had fallen to the ground, we imagine the rest.

The journalist filming these scenes, crouched amongst the tombstones, is summoned by the beckoning finger of one of the military killers, is he himself safe from their fury? The watcher cannot be sure...

Naturally, anyone seeing the film feels the desire to do something for these young people, victims of a military machine both determined and implacable. This is what has caused people in places as diverse as Portugal and Indonesia, USA Australia, Japan, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Macau, to take to the streets to show their abhorrence against Indonesia.

Portugal

The people here were not only better informed overall, because East Timor is a former Portuguese colony, but also they had been awaiting with curiosity the outcome of the projected visit by the Portuguese parliamentarians which had been cancelled just days before the massacre.

The Yorkshire TV film, shown on Portuguese TV, also served to reinforce and give enhanced credibility to earlier reports which had been seen by some as somewhat tenuous because of their clandestine sources.

The images provoked widespread reaction. National mourning was declared, Portuguese students spontaneously held marches in the streets of dozens of towns and cities. They demanded that the countries authorities show themselves more active at the international diplomatic level to obtain the necessary support for a political solution: "Actions not speeches!" chanted demonstrators in Lisbon"s main square as Maria Barroso, wife of the President of the Republic, was addressing words of solidarity to the Timorese people.

But the wave of feeling touched all sectors of society, trade unions and employers organizations, journalists and advertising executives, footballers and artists, amateur radio enthusiasts and singers, writers and lawyers, both the Catholic and Protestant churches as well as the Center for Islamic studies... innumerable initiatives made their solidarity concrete: a nation-wide minute of silence, the concerts and sales of works of art to raise money for the Timorese resistance, the free publicity campaigns on national TV, radio, newspapers, boardings; the peaceful occupation of the Papal Nunciature in Lisbon to ask the Pope to speak up for Timor; the delivering of a barrel of oil to the Australian embassy...

Australia

It is here, along with Portugal, that the public reaction has been strongest. Its proximity to Timor (500 kms), its strong community of Timorese exiles, and the bad conscience from which many Australians suffered after their government's decision to make Indonesia a privileged trading partner and its recognition of the integration of East Timor despite the UN refusal to ratify it.

There have been numerous demonstrations in the streets and elsewhere, and in particular in front of the Indonesian embassy and consulates. The trade unions have called for various boycotts on boats and planes to Indonesia, and against goods destined for the embassy.

Japan

Leading investor in Indonesia, Japan is also one of the most sensitive on the East Timor question, not least because it was one of the territories which it occupied during World War II. Of all countries, it has the largest number of solidarity groups formally constituted in support of the right to independence of the Timorese People. Meetings and demonstrations took place in many towns and cities.

The Bishops' Catholic Conference sent a letter of condolence to Bishop Belo and another to the UN General Secretary in support of Bishop Belo's appeal for a referendum.

France

'France Libertés' organized a Paris press conference with Danielle Mitterand and José Ramos-Horta, Special Representative of the CNRM (National Council of Maubere Resistance).

Remy Baumann, President of Médecins Sans Frontières, announced that his organization would send medical supplies to Timor if Indonesia agreed. East Timor is one of the few territories it has never been able to enter up to now (the others being Tibet and Western Sahara).

Canada

The Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregationalist Churches called for the government to put pressure on the Indonesian government to renounce the use of military force and allow a process of self-determination to the people of East Timor.

The Chairman of the Canadian Council of Churches declared that the suspension of economic aid to Indonesia which had been decided by the government was not sufficient and that it should impose an embargo on arms sales.

The Age, Washington Post, The Times, The Guardian, The New York Times...

Human rights fall into a Timor gap *

What is now clear is that even after 16 years of strong-arm control, many East Timorese do not consider themselves Indonesian. This week's tragedy will strengthen the demands, among them and internationally, for an act of self-determination.

* [Australia and Indonesia have signed a agreement to share exploitation of the oil-rich Timor gap. This agreement has been challenged by Portugal at the Court of International Justice at The Hague]

(The Age (Australia) - editorial, 14/11/91)

Dead in East Timor

By chance a couple of American journalists were in East Timor, at the precise time and place when the security forces opened fire. (...)

Back in the 70's, most of the world had other things on its mind than a remote colonial backwater named East Timor. The American government was in the throes of its Vietnam agony, unprepared to exert itself for a cause that could only end up complicating relations with its sturdy anti-Communist ally in Jakarta. But that was then.

Today, with the East-West conflict gone, almost everyone is readier to consider legitimate calls for self-determination. It is time to dust off the question of East Timor and to give it the priority that justice and, now, international sentiment require. The United States has supported Indonesia over the years and should be able to bring its influence to bear on this issue. (...)

Indonesia has the opportunity to pull the thorn of East Timor, to abandon an exercise in Third World colonialism that represents an abiding embarrassment to a country seeking respect and a wider role.

(The Washington Post - editorial, 20/11/91)

Island of oppression

Two massacres of East Timorese civilians by the Indonesian army have forced that neglected and brutalized people back into the consciousness of the world. The Indonesian annexation is said by the resistance to have cost the lives of some 200,000 civilians over the last 16 years.

The United Nations is being urged by Portugal to challenge this vicious occupation. But the great democratic powers - America, Europe and Japan - have so far shown no serious determination to bring the Indonesian government's crimes against humanity in East Timor to an end. (...)

Britain as a permanent member of the UN Security Council could still press for a UN-sponsored referendum in East Timor. (...) **Such a plebiscite would be the only just method of ascertaining whether East Timor wishes to remain part of Indonesia,** to revive links with Portugal or, most likely, to become independent. They have a right to such choice.

(The Times - editorial, 22/11/91)

Concern is not enough

Former client States in the former cold war must be looked at more critically. We hear so often that democracy and human rights are indivisible that we actually begin to believe it. The new tide also has its effects within the states concerned, where local democratic forces gain courage to raise their voices.

Yesterday saw an unprecedent street protest in Jakarta against the Dili killings, while Indonesian human rights organizations risk punishment by heading for the island to conduct their own investigation.

(The Guardian - editorial, 20/11/91)

Tears for the Timorese

East what? That's how many Americans might react to the massacres in East Timor. (...)

Creditably, Portugal has called for an international inquiry, and rejects as a farce Indonesia's promised investigation.

Yet the United Nations has forgotten its own past condemnation of Indonesia's territorial grab. Troops from Indonesia have been asked by the UN to participate in a peacekeeping force in the Western Sahara - thus turning the poacher into a gamekeeper.

It strains law and logic to distinguish between Jakarta's seizure of East Timor and Iraq's annexation of Kuwait.

Washington has mostly just mumbled disapproval of Indonesia's takeover. Indonesia is evidently too important, and East Timor too poor, for this wrong to excite indignation anywhere but in Portugal.

(The New York Times - editorial, 22/11/91)

Indonesia's Tiananmen

The Indonesian government has reacted in panic and defiance to the ballooning world reaction to its slaughter of East Timorese independence demonstrators on Nov. 12 - an Indonesian Tiananmen. (...)

The immediate priority is to put enough heat on and to put observers in East Timor to prevent further retaliation against the independence people. Australia can make a special contribution: to suspend its agreement with Jakarta dividing oil rights in the sea between it and East Timor. **There must be a parallel effort to deal with the political roots of the problem. That means going beyond condemnation and impartial investigation and organizing an expression of self-determination. The United Nations could do the job best.**

If Indonesia is right in claiming that it has brought prosperity and light to East Timor, it would not fear a fair poll. President Bush, liberator of Kuwait, should make this his policy's priority.

(The Washington Post - editorial, 9/12/91)

Official international reactions.

The European Community, the US, Japan, Australia, the Scandinavian countries, the Vatican, and others, all expressed in one form or another their condemnation of the massacre in Santa Cruz. Most countries called for an impartial inquiry under international control. A half dozen countries went further and decided to review or suspend the granting of economic aid to Indonesia until the results of the inquiry became known. What lies behind these words once the focus of public opinion has moved on? How many times have such words been uttered with the principal, or indeed only, aim of assuaging this opinion? Unhappily there have already appeared some signs of just such cynicism. There has often been a gulf between the positions adopted by parliaments and the decisions of governments, the latter being more sensitive to economic repercussions.

UN

As soon as he heard of the massacre in Dili, the UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar stated that he hoped that "measures would be taken to avoid any recurrence" of such a situation (12/11). Then he announced his intention of sending Amos Waco, UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Executions, to Jakarta to prepare, in conjunction with the Indonesian authorities, for the sending of a "totally independent and impartial mission".

"A UN mission would be an interference in our internal affairs!" claimed representatives of the armed forces *(Hartono)* and of Golkar *(Théo Sambuaga)* [*but the UN has never recognized East Timor as having been integrated in Indonesia*].

"If it is true that the Secretary-General wants to send an envoy to Indonesia for a simple visit, we maybe would accept it, but if he wants to negotiate sending a fact-finding mission to East Timor, the problem would be different, it would be necessary for Indonesia to agree" *(Foreign Ministry spokesman Suteja Kartawijaya - Indonesian Observer 4/12)*

"We have always cooperated with the UN and if the Secretary-General wishes to send an envoy he will be well received" said Ali Alatas in December, but in January he made it known that he would accept the visit by the Secretary-General's representative but refused a commission of inquiry.

The visit by Amos Waco was postponed to 8 February 1992, almost 3 months after the massacre, because of difficulties raised by Indonesia; Amnesty International president, Ian Martin, commented that this would be "insufficient" if it did not establish the framework for a complete and independent inquiry into the massacre and its aftermath.

In February, Amnesty International sent the UN Secretary-General a list with the names of 65 Timorese who had been detained in the course of these events, along with student arrests, in particular from the Indonesian towns of Yogyakarta, Malang and Salatiga, who have been kept incommunicado.

Australia

The then PM, Bob Hawke, referred to the "horrible tragedy" of the massacre and the "repugnant" statement by Gen. Try Sutrisno that "they had to be shot".

Philip Flood, ambassador to Jakarta went to Dili and estimated that there had been more than 100 killed.

The governing Australian Labour party were able to approve unanimously a resolution saying that it was necessary "to take into account the ancient necessities and aspirations of the Timorese people".

But the Foreign Minister Gareth Evans went to Jakarta to sign agreements with Indonesia for the exploitation of oil reserves under the Timor Sea... and the Australian army is training Indonesian officers at the Canunga Warfare Center to lead the special troops against the Timorese armed resistance.

Newly appointed PM Keating says that he is satisfied with the results of the Indonesian investigation.

Canada

Canada was the first country to announce that it was reconsidering its economic aid to Indonesia. On 8 December it announced the suspension of all projects of direct aid to the government, involving some $US 27 million.

China

Chinese PM, Pi Peng, who was himself the object of demonstrations because of Tienanmen during a recent visit to Portugal, stated that Portugal had nothing to say about East Timor because it had been "the colonizer".

Up to its recent reconciliation with Indonesia, China had always defended the independence of East Timor.

Europe

The European Parliament (EP), the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe (ACE) and the parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Western Europe (UWE) have recently passed resolutions on East Timor. They condemn not only the massacre but "the continuing violence" since 1975, call for the freeing of political prisoners (EP) and access by humanitarian organizations to Timor (ACE and UWE) and also the imposition of an embargo on arms sales to Indonesia. The European Parliament has also demanded that there be a an inquiry into the massacre and that economic aid to Indonesia be linked to its results. The ACE and UWE also demand that the Indonesian armed forces be withdrawn from East Timor and that conditions be prepared for the people of East Timor to achieve self-determination and independence.

The Foreign Ministers of the EC and the UWE condemned the violence and pressed the Indonesian government to refrain from its use in the territory. They stressed their "support for a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable settlement of the East Timor issue, respecting the principles of the United Nations' Charter", "to defend human rights and fundamental freedoms" and "the full respect of the legitimate interests and aspirations of the populations of this territory". On 3 December they underlined the importance of recent decisions by the EC linking development aid to the respecting of human rights by the aid recipients and announced that they would "review the cooperation between the European Community and Indonesia in the light of the above mentioned orientations and regulations, and taking into account the response of the Indonesian authorities".

Denmark

The government announced the suspension of economic aid to Indonesia to the value of $US 4 million. Resumption of aid would depend on the reaction of the authorities to the investigation in course. (12/12)

Japan

A diplomatic mission was sent to Dili. It stated that it could not come to any conclusions as to the events. The PM stated on 24/12 that the problems in East Timor and Burma were important and that Japan would take them into account in its decisions regarding economic aid.

Netherlands

The Foreign Minister declared in a letter to parliament that he had arrived at the conclusion that the massacre was a deliberate act by the Indonesian military and not the result of an impulse of the moment.

Having suspended the granting of fresh economic aid to Indonesia until the situation in East Timor had been clarified, Netherlands declared itself satisfied with the results of the Indonesia inquiry. Parliament, however, opposes the resumption of aid programs.

Portugal

Portugal proposed to the new UN Secretary-General that direct talks should be set up, without pre-conditions, between Portugal , Indonesia and representatives of the Timorese people, with a view to finding a "just, global and acceptable solution in the light of international law."

This proposal, which had obtained the approval of the EC foreign ministers (3 Feb.), had not received any official Indonesian response up that time. F. Lopes da Cruz, councillor to President Suharto, has stated that Indonesia would refuse such a proposal because acceptance would imply recognition that Timorese were not Indonesians.

Scandinavian countries

Finland, Norway and Sweden sent a common protest to the Indonesian ambassadors in their countries.

Vatican

In his speech to the diplomatic corps on 11 January, Pope John Paul II referred to East Timor: "I would not like to conclude this brief look at Asia without referring to a home of permanent tension: East Timor, which was a great joy to me to visit. As I have already said on various occasions, a dialogue must be achieved".

Shortly after the massacre the Vatican replaced its ambassador in Jakarta, Mgr. Canalini of whom the Timorese clergy had complained, and sent a special representative on a visit "to comfort the Timorese Church".

South Africa

The problem of East Timor merits the immediate attention of the UN and must be resolved within the framework of the UN, declared Nelson Mandela speaking before the UN General Assembly.

United Kingdom

The government called in the Indonesian ambassador to express its "serious concern".

The House of Commons Human Rights Committee invited three of the journalists present in Dili to speak and then published their testimony.

At the end of January the foreign minister declared that Britain wanted an investigation into the relative differences in the figures for the dead, and the large number of people who had disappeared. He called for clear decisions and punishment of those responsible.

USA

The USA condemned the massacre and called for the holding of a complete investigation into the events (12/11).

Diplomats from the US embassy in Jakarta went to Dili and estimated that the shooting had led to 75 to 100 deaths.

James Baker having seen the film of the massacre described the scenes of unarmed Timorese being shot down in the cemetery as "grotesque", according to a White House press release (Público 23/11).

The Senate unanimously approved a resolution calling on President Bush to "suspend immediately" all aid and military training to the Indonesian military, but the State Department made it known that it would not suspend the aid because "these kinds of programs expose the trainee to democratic ideas and humanitarian standards" (Público 23/11).

A White House spokesman successively expressed the satisfaction of the USA with the setting up of President Suharto's investigation commission and later judged its report to be "serious and responsible" and "a not unreasonable account of events".

52 senators wrote a letter to George Bush saying "we are aware that the Department of State has acknowledged formally at least some aspects of the problems in East Timor. Nevertheless, it appears that further action is warranted in the light of continuing reports of repression".

Photo Steve Cox / Independente

In Indonesia: international public opinion

The massacre in Dili, and above all the attention it received from the world press and from governments abroad, resulted in a number of questions being raised within Indonesia itself. Such pressure as there was, although relatively timid, was enough to create a climate of opinion, which although not yet free, had advanced sufficiently for the question of the political problems of the integration of East Timor to be posed. *

The Indonesian Organization for the Defense of Human Rights was the first to react. Over the years they have been taking a growing interest in the problems of East Timor. Certain of their members were associated with the demonstration by Timorese students in Jakarta. A number of their leaders have felt the consequences: Poncke Princen, Chairman of the League for the Defense of Human Rights (LPHAM); Indro Tjahjono, of the Indonesian Front for the Rights of Man (Infight); and Yopie Lasut, of the New Life Foundation, (Hidup Baru), were all interviewed by the Bakorstanas (security service). The former two were interrogated for 8 hours on 20 November, and again on the days that followed, while Yopie Lasut chose to go into hiding for some days. A delegation, which also included members of the Legal Aid Institute, who intended going to Dili itself, was forbidden to do so.

Indonesian student members of the Forum of Student Senates debated the massacre during their annual meeting on 20 and 21 November in Bandung. They organized a demonstration in protest and the representatives of students from 11 Universities and 3rd level institutions signed a document which included the following:

"We call on the Indonesian government to allow an international (UN) team to conduct an investigation so as to ensure that an objective and independent investigation is conducted, and to dissolve the National Commission of Investigation (KPN), whose independence is untrustworthy as it is composed of people from government circles.

We call on the Indonesian government to withdraw all elements of the armed forces from East Timor without delay and give the people of East Timor absolute freedom to exercise their right to self-determination, in order to put a halt to any more spilling of blood."

(Tapol, The Indonesian Human Rights Campaign 2/12)

The Indonesian Catholic Bishop's Conference, after a visit to Dili by the hear of their information department, Romo Alfons (from 22 to 26/11), published a statement:

"Many families did not know whether their husbands, brothers and sisters, or children were still alive or dead (...)

At the time of the burials, families were not notified.

As for the number of those who died: some say three truck loads, others say more than one hundred people.

Why the Indonesian Armed Forces opened fire, causing many casualties, is the question in many people's minds since the shooting happened at the entrance of the Santa Cruz cemetery, far from the place where the two members of the Armed Forces were stabbed.

Regarding rumors of executions of a number of people on the evening of November 12th, those who regularly receive information were doubtful of its truth. (...)

We really deplore that because of the actions of a group of ABRI [*the Indonesians Armed Forces*], **the moral integrity, dignity, and credibility of the nation have been put into jeopardy in the eyes of the world as well as our own country".** *(Indonesia Publications and Tempo 7/12).* Such statements are still isolated and find little place in an Indonesian press accustomed to practicing self-censorship to avoid compulsory cuts. It was through official statements that Indonesians obtained their knowledge of what the authorities called the "Dili incident".

As international criticisms mounted, the authorities proceeded to refute them and their denials were published in the local press, thus opening the door to a considerable quantity of information and the facts that lay behind these criticisms.

The grip of censorship was really loosened when President Suharto was obliged under international pressure to announce the formation of a commission of inquiry.

The space reserved in the press for the East Timor question immediately expanded dramatically and showed the importance of the problem (the weekly Tempo, for example, which had not mentioned the massacre in its 16 November edition, devoted sections in three successive editions to East Timor: 14 pages on 23/11, 15 on 30/11 and 15 on 7/12).

It was the repercussions for Indonesia itself which provoked interest and concern, more than the massacre in itself. Many of the newspapers prefaced their accounts with accusations by the authorities against the "biased information in the foreign press". **'Media Indonesia' encouraged the national press to "counterbalance the information in the Western press"**; the 'Indonesia Times' announced that a lobbying campaign was to be launched by business interests and especially by Uncle Liem, richest man in the country and business adviser to President Suharto *(Público 23/11).*

The press also reported the demonstrations at Indonesian embassies in certain countries, the international demands for an inquiry and the suspension of economic aid on the part of some governments.

The government regarded these reactions as "disproportionate" (Jakarta Post and Indonesia Times) but the counter-reaction was itself far from temperate:

- 'Tempo' considered that **the Western countries were resorting to "blackmail" by linking their economic aid to human rights** *(30/11).*
- The Vice-President of the Committee for Interior Security, Oka Mahendre, indignantly declared: "only a totalitarian and anarchic country would force its will on another country".
- Berita Buana criticized the West and its humanitarian principles, as well as "the practice of democracy by the people of East Timor that is still too western" *(20/11).*

* [*the quotations from the Indonesian press on these pages are from the files of 'Agir pour Timor' - Paris*]

provokes stirrings of democracy...

But in the midst of these denials and protestations some doubts also appeared.

"Where did it go wrong?", was the headline in the 30 November edition of 'Tempo'. Many papers tried to piece together an answer to this question: the human rights violations, the economy, the lack of employment, the very high level of immigration (of Indonesians) which acted to the detriment of the native Timorese, the lack of humanity in dealings with the Timorese, the non-acceptance by the Timorese of everything pertaining to Indonesia... The Jakarta Post urged that it was a matter of urgency to **"hold as quickly as possible an impartial inquiry to insure Indonesia's credibility"** because **"the wounds which have been opened will take a long time to heal if the problems and their causes are not attacked immediately"**. Amongst these factors the paper highlights the **"competition between the local population and the immigrants recently-arrived from the rest of the archipelago"**

A political question

"The army is always the people's army" claimed the head of the armed forces, Gen. Try Sutrisno *(Suara Pembaruan 22/11)*. Could it be that Indonesians have now begun to doubt this, thus making such affirmations necessary?

"Whatever resolutions the UN may vote on East Timor, this province is an inseparable part of Indonesia" reaffirmed Sudomo, Political Affairs and Security minister *(Jakarta Post 3/12)*. This statement may be an important one for the regime bearing in mind that Indonesian public opinion is becoming aware that the Timorese have steadfastly refused this integration, if indeed there were any doubts about this, but above all as it becomes apparent that the complacent silence of the international community does have its limits and that the Indonesian army may have now gone beyond them.

Yusuf Wanandi, director of the Center for Strategic Studies in Jakarta, who has never been considered a political dove, declared that **"this incident destroys the efforts of 15 years work to achieve the integration of East Timor in Indonesia"**. M. Carrascalão drew the same conclusion regarding his 9 years as governor of the territory.

"We must re-analyse Indonesian policy on East Timor" suggests Marzuki Darusman MP and member of the governing party.

"The government needs to have contact with those who still are not in favor of integration, namely Fretilin" according to Timorese councillor to President Suharto, Francisco Lopes da Cruz.

The Interior Minister, addressing the suggestion that a certain autonomy be give to East Timor within Indonesia, as for example is the case of Aceh (North Sumatra) and Yogyakarta (Central Java) who have the status of 'special territories', commented that

"I could change the name now, but what would that change? There is nothing special about the administration of the two provinces of Aceh and Yogyakarta" - they received this status because of their contribution during the war of independence *(Jakarta Post 4/12)*.

The questions have begun to be posed. International reaction, both in the press and on the part of certain governments has certainly played a part in provoking them. Without doubt, the strongest has been that concerning economic aid.

Foreign economic aid

It has been seen in the case of South Africa that economic sanctions were instrumental in forcing an unwilling government to tackle the apartheid problem. The first threats of suspension of economic aid to Indonesia would appear to have been sufficient to bring the regime to set up an investigation commission, although initially strongly opposed to the idea.

Indonesia is particularly sensitive on the question of economic aid sanctions. It is presently in receipt of external aid on an altogether exceptional scale, to the tune of 25.57% of the State budget last year.

When Holland and Canada decided to suspend their aid until more light was shone on the massacre in Dili, their reaction was greeted in some quarters with outrage: 'Tempo' complains of "blackmail" and MP Imron Rosyadi declared "Holland has gone too far".

Others attempted to talk down the effects: economist Kwik Kian Gie, effecting ignorance of the leading role played by the Netherlands in the coordination of foreign aid to Indonesia, declared that the suspension would have little impact "because Holland is not a large-scale donor" *(Jakarta Post 25/11)*.

In reality there is considerable disquiet; a senior official who prefers not to be named, speaks of the possibility of a "domino effect". If these two countries are the only ones to withdraw their assistance it would not be of very great importance, but if Japan, for example, did so it would provoke a budgetary deficit *(Tempo 7/12)*.

"If there is not a credible and detailed investigation, Indonesia could follow the example of China after the Tienanmen massacre, but the country cannot afford the luxury of saving its internal development and its international reputation" *(Yusuf Wanandi)*.

"We hope that the countries who cooperate with us economically will have sufficient maturity not to embark on political and economic measures." said Ali Alatas *(Tempo 7/12)*.

In recent years, Indonesian pro-democracy organizations have appealed to IGGI (the international grouping which coordinates governmental aid to Indonesia) chairman, Dutch Minister Jan Pronk, to use aid as a means of bringing about democratization of the regime. The European Community finally decided at the end of last year to link aid with the respect for human rights in the receiver countries. It now remains for it to use its influence to see to it that this principle is adopted within IGGI.

Although the holding of an impartial inquiry to determine the causes and responsibility for the massacre of an unarmed crowd, appeared to be an altogether appropriate response in most other countries, in Indonesia this was not so, for a number of reasons:

- **"The Indonesian armed forces cannot be put in question"** *(Gen. Nurhadi Purwosaputro - Kompas, quoted in the Nation, Bangkok)*
- **"It is not a question of knowing if errors were committed or not"** *(Gen. S.Panjaitan - Tempo; /12)*
- **"That the army was responsible cannot be envisaged"** *(Gen. Try Sutrisno - Indonesian Times 14/11)*

As mounting international pressure obliged the Indonesian authorities to review their position, they began to give ground, albeit with a certain irritation:

- **"It goes without saying that we are disturbed by these events, which indeed we regret also"** *(Gen. Try Sutrisno)*

its composition,

Encouraged by the international pressure and by the president's decision, certain newspapers and public figures showed their surprise and dared to comment on the composition of the commission:

- **"Never in the countries history has such a commission been created, or at least, never has such a creation been made public, but because of international pressure they was no other possibility"** *(Editorial in the Berita Buana newspaper, 18/11)*
- **"The composition of the commission is vital to insure international credibility"** *(The Indonesian Observer)*
- **"It is true that we are dealing with an internal affair, but if others wish to search for rigorous and exact information, we should let them. When one is dealing with a question of human rights, throughout the world it is the responsibility of the entire human species..."** *Abdurrahman Wahid, president of Nahdatul Ulama, an important muslim group)*

The commission members are:

- **M. Djaelani**, former general, member of the supreme court.
- **Hari Sugiman**, former general and director of SOSPOL, the group within the Interior Ministry responsible for the control of social organizations.
- **Sumitro**, a vice-admiral and inspector general of the armed forces.
- **Hadi Wayarabi**, a senior member of the Foreign Office,
- **Anton Suyata**, inspector general from the Ministry of Justice,

  both graduates of the Lois Military Academy.
- **Ben Mang Reng Say**,
- **Clementino dos Reis Amaral**, East Timorese,

  both Golkar (governing party) deputies.

But this was merely to calm international protests which were beginning to conjure up the specter of an international inquiry:

- **"We are a sovereign state and we do not allow anyone to meddle in our internal affairs"** *(Gen. Try Sutrisno - Indonesian Times 14/11)*
- **"We do not want any interference from outside investigations"** *(Gen. Nurhadi Purwosaputro - Kompas, quoted in The Nation, Bangkok)*
- **"Permitting a foreign country to participate in an inquiry concerning the incident could not be justified because it would put in question Indonesia's credibility."** *(M. Carrascalão)*

On realizing that a military inquiry would not be sufficient to disarm its critics, President Suharto announced the setting up of a "civil" commission, rather a difficult thing to do in a country where not only is the president a general who became head of State in a military coup some 26 years ago, but also onein which the military are to be found at every level of the State apparatus.

The Legal Aid Institute, an Indonesian human rights organization, suggested that NGO members and journalists should form part of the commission, and the League for the Restoration of Democracy insisted on the need for an independent inquiry, but all in va in. **"All the people chosen are servants of the Indonesian government"** comments Michael Leifer , lecturer on South-East Asian Affairs at the London School of Economics, pointing out that this goes against the principles which were established for commissions of this nature by the UN Economic and Social Council in 1989 which states that members **"must be chosen for their recognized impartiality, competence and independence as individuals. In particular they shall be independent of any institution, agency or person that may be the subject of the inquiry".**

Amnesty International and Asia Watch, along with the Council of Ministers of the EC criticized the composition of the commission, but other states who had been demanding the holding of an impartial inquiry declared themselves to be satisfied and said they would await its conclusions. In was the case with the US, Japan and Australia. Australia, and in particular Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, made no be able to continue as before. "I think that they have understood" he remarked, satisfied, on his return from Jakarta.

The UN Secretary-General, although he did not pronounce specifically on the inquiry commission set up by Suharto, must at least have regarded it as insufficient because he announced that he proposed sending a representative to Jakarta to study the possibility of sending a UN investigatory mission. The governor of East Timor rejected this as a possibility, saying that "this would only create more trouble".

In reality the Indonesian Government was afraid of any inquiry which it did not control.

# of inquiry

Its proceedings,

The composition of the commission led José Ramos-Horta, spokesman for the Timorese resistance, to comment bluntly: **"you wouldn't ask Pol Pot to investigate the Khmer Rouge killings"!**

Even before setting out for Dili its members appeared to have borne out the criticisms levelled:

- **"The Dili incident was purposely created by Portugal to discredit Indonesia in the international world"** *(Hadi Wayarabi - Suara Pembaraun 23/11)*
- **"I have been invited by the head of the commission to give them information, seeing as they regard me as someone with experience in Timorese affairs"** *(Gen. Benny Murdani - Jakarta Post 26/11 - presently minister for defence and in 1975 one of those principally behind the invasion and occupation of the territory)*
- **"A detailed inquiry will be carried out against the rioters"** *(Indonesian Times 14/11)*
- **"The Timorese are guilty until they have been proved innocent"** *(Indonesian Times 19/11)*

The commission went to Dili on 28 November. M. Carrascalão presented them with two reports (100 and 300 pages) whose contents are not known, but the governor also gave an interview to Kompas magazine:

Q. - Is the commission going to question the families of the victims?

A. - I have suggested ways that the people who wish to speak could do so without fear of being exposed.

Q. - Will the bodies of the victims be handed over to their families?

A. - I am not authorized to answer and I myself do not know where the bodys are. I imagine that this is a decision taken at a higher level"

Q. - Are there any civil servants in prison?

A. - I have not read the report yet

Q. - Are the people afraid to give information?

A. - When they meet the government [governor] to give information, they always ask that their names be kept secret. If the commission promises to do the same then I think the people will speak up.

The commission also met with Bishop Belo who told Suara Pembaruan that **"the diocesan office has drawn up a list of the faithful who at the moment are not to be found in their homes, particularly in Dili parish"**; but the Bishop **"refuse to give the commission the names of the eye-witnesses who have come forward as long as the commission does not guarantee their security"** according to 'Tempo'.

The head of the commission later said that **"how can the commission know if there were eye-witnesses when we are not able to talk to them. This is difficult. We cannot find out anything if they do not come forward to meet us ...many witnesses are afraid to talk to the commission"** *(Jakarta Jakarta 4-10/1/92)*

and its conclusions.

Some days later, and still trying to appease international opinion, the official report said that **it had only been possible to confirm 19 deaths and 91 injured,** [*the figures put forward by the military*], **but that there were sufficient indications to say that the number of deaths was in the region of 50 and the injured more than 90. It acknowledged a further 90 as having disappeared.**

These decisions would appear to have been taken for political reasons; although the investigators did not exhume the 18 bodies buried at Hera (that of the young New Zealander had already been handed over to his family) the missing 30 bodies could not be f found. How can this be explained? Was it not the army itself that buried them?

The commission describes three versions of the shooting: without warning, the troops in formation opened fire on the crowd; a grenade was thrown from the crowd which also attempted to take the soldiers weapons, provoking the shooting; the shots coming from a crowd which the security forces could not control, which preceded the shooting. **It does not opt for either one of theses versions but instead attributes the main responsibility for the massacre to demonstrators many of whom were manipulated or even fo forced to participate by a minority opposed to integration with Indonesia. It also recognizes that the security forces had gone beyond acceptable norms with regard to the number of dead and wounded from the shooting, the stabbings and the other injuries.**

Observers consider that, for the Indonesian military regime, the conclusions go beyond everything which had been seen up to that point. Infight considers it a "serious effort" compared to normal practice, but states that **"a neutral commission under the auspices of the UN is still necessary".**

Generals Warouw and Panjaitan were recalled from their units and replaced. On being questioned about the conclusions Bishop Belo replied:

"I ask only this: where are the 50 dead the commission talk about, where are their bodies? I have not given up, I would like to know where are the many other Timorese who have disappeared...

From the first it was clear that it was the military who were uniquely responsible.

The commander is only a small part of the Indonesian system. It would be better if they were all demoted and punished".

(Mgr Belo - Público 9/1/92)

Gen. Syafei, Warouw's successor, declared on his arrival in Dili that he "would not be as patient as Gen. Warouw".

Three Timorese witnesses

Guilherme dos Santos, president of the Regional Assembly
Manuel Carrascalão, brother of the Governor
Paulo ..., member of the Regional Assembly

and three Indonesian journalists...

stick then neck out!

The Indonesian publication 'Jakarta Jakarta', published the testimony of East Timorese eyewitnesses of the massacre in Dili, in its 4 - 10 January edition. It came under fire straight away, in particular from Gen. Try Sutrisno, and the managing director decided to dismiss editor Seno Gumira Ajidarma, national politics editor Usep Hermawan, and arts editor Waskito Trisnoald.

Most of the testimonies were anonymous, to protect the witnesses, but there were three witnesses, members of the East Timor Regional Assembly, a local government structure set up by the Indonesians, who consented to have their identities revealed.

"I went to Santa Cruz just in time to see the last corpse and another person who was being beaten by an 'oknum'".
['oknum', meaning person. It has a negative connotation]
(Guilherme dos Santos)

"Those who were arrested were dealt with very harshly. I happened to see one person who had probably only fainted, but as soon as these fellows saw his head move, they immediately struck him with a stone. Someone else I saw was still alive, on the truck which was full of corpses; then a fellow dragged him off and struck him on the head. After that, he was loaded onto the truck again".
(Manuel Carrascalão)

"When they came out of the Church, they began to shout: "Long live Xanana! Long live Fretilin!" unfurling anti-integration banners and posters as they made their way to Santa Cruz cemetery. Outside the Kodim office, near the Governor's Office, one group was harassed by a soldier. (...) I think there were 3,000 people or more on the demonstration. The two forward groups has passed the Kodim office, and the group of the rear was harassed by soldiers. They began to hit the demonstrators with wooden clubs and two people were hurt. Meanwhile, there was a major standing at the roadside, tacking photos, so one of the demonstrators attacked him with a knife. The group went into a panic and started running; some went towards the Governor's Office and some ran back the way they had come.

But some of the demonstrators were determined to keep going and catch up with the forward groups. I continued to follow in my jeep because I could see there were no older people around who might be able to prevent anything untoward from happening.

In front of Resende Hotel, there were some intelligence agents in plain clothes who were trying to beat the demonstrators with their clubs. I shouted out, warning them to stop. It so happens that one of them was from my part of the country, so he was afraid.

At the Santa Cruz junction, there were three trucks full of soldiers. And there were also around 1,500 people who were getting ready to lay flowers in the cemetery. There were two kind of troops; some were fully dressed in army uniforms but they weren't carrying firearms, only bayonets. Others who were wearing trousers and were bare from the waist up, were carrying firearms. They started getting ready to shoot.

Then their commander who was wearing a camouflage t-shirt and army trousers shot once into the air and the troops got down from the trucks. The soldiers who were not wearing shirts and were carrying machine-guns immediately began to shot at the demonstrators. They fired from a distance of about 10 meters. The shooting went on for about 5 minutes. Everyone in the front fell as they were hit by bullets. At that moment the soldiers who were fully dressed and carrying bayonets got down to see whether anyone was still alive, kicking them with their feet. Anyone who still seemed to be moving and was still alive was stabbed with a knife.

I watched this brutality for about 10 minutes, but then the commander shouted at me, telling me to leave the area immediately. I quickly left Santa Cruz, but soon after (about three minutes later), I heard a second volley of shooting which went on for only about two minutes. I think that at the very least 200 people were wounded. I went straight home and didn't return.

I have made a similar statement to the Indonesian commission and to the Australian ambassador, Philip Flood".
(Paulo, a member of the DPRD - Regional Assembly)